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Near East & South Asia

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ECO Foreign Ministers Hold Meeting in Tehran

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Gives Opening Remarks

LD2501122294 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Excerpt] The fourth meeting of foreign ministers of member countries of the Economic Cooperation Organization [ECO] began in Tehran today with a speech by President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

At the opening ceremony, the president stressed the need for regional cooperation and collective effort as a crucial strategy for the region's economic development and for coping with the difficulties arising from global political developments. Our correspondent reports:

[Unidentified correspondent] Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that, through strengthening and promoting our economic cooperation, we can present new models of cooperation for developing our economic infrastructure and for securing a lasting development, so as to reduce our economic dependence on the developed countries.

Referring to the region's potential in view of its vast geographical boundaries, its rich natural resources, manpower, extensive markets, great capacity to attract capital and technology, and its many other valuable resources, the president said: Politics and economics are two vital factors affecting the destiny of states. Both of them, by influencing one another, could secure the region's economic development; that is, the main objective of the ECO. This would be a factor enabling the member countries to enjoy greater power to maintain their economic independence and to take charge of their own destiny.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani pointed out: Many of the member countries' national plans can be prepared in such a way that the upgrading of the level of regional relations would accelerate overall cooperation. The president added: The grounds for cooperation, endorsed and approved in two documents of practical plan and long-term planning, are very appropriate and useful. If implemented, they would meet major needs of the member countries in the important fields of communication, trade, industry, culture, science, agriculture, and infrastructure across the region.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani went on to refer to the Islamic Republic of Iran's stances based on respect for international borders, the peaceful resolution of political disputes, the peaceful solution of internal discords in other countries, the prevention of tyranny and injustice, and the defense of the justified rights of human beings. He declared: We wish to see the ECO members enjoy security and tranquillity too. May the constructive approach of combining thoughts and cooperating with the nations of the region manifest itself in the speedy reconstruction of their countries. He added: Along this path the Islamic Republic of Iran would not refrain from undertaking any efforts, and it expects the other ECO members to employ all their efforts for this purpose.

The president continued: Unfortunately the arrogant powers do not care about ending tensions and destructive regional conflicts in the Third World as long as their own interests are not threatened. On occasion they even fan the flames so as to realize their satanic objectives and to pursue their illegitimate interests. The Tehran session is, therefore, an appropriate opportunity for an exchange of views on political situation of the region, to restore stability and security. [passage omitted]

Velayati Addresses Meeting

LD2501140994 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] After the speech delivered by the president at the meeting of foreign ministers of the Economic Cooperation Organization [ECO], a ceremony was held transferring the annual presidency from Pakistan to the Islamic Republic of Iran. Having become the meeting's chairman, Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati delivered a speech on the reasons for holding the meeting and ways in which ECO members can cooperate.

Mr. Velayati said: In order to achieve its aims, ECO needs to benefit from the experience and financial and technical cooperation of specialist and international organizations. In this connection, it is willing to provide part of the costs of implementing joint projects. The foreign minister said that progress will not be possible unless ECO members make serious and constant efforts. He added: It is vital for the organization to find new ways to expedite decisionmaking and the implementation of projects. He also said that the Islamic Republic of Iran is of the opinion that part of the region's fundamental needs will be met with the commencement and expansion of the activities of institutions affiliated to ECO, such as the bank for development and commerce, the reinsurance company [bimeh-ye etteka'i], ECO's science foundation, ECO's cultural foundation, the shipping and airline transport organizations, as well as other planned ECO organizations.

Our correspondent's report states that the session continued with speeches delivered by a number of other participants.

Velayati Queried on ECO Session

LD2501160594 Tehran IRIB Television Second Program Network in English 1430 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] My colleague had an interview with Foreign Minister Mr. Velayati on the sidelines of the Economic Conference Organization [ECO] ministerial session.

[Begin recording] [Correspondent] The fourth session of the ECO Council of Foreign Ministers has opened in Tehran with the presence of more than ten delegations from the member countries. Mr. Foreign Minister, could you briefly explain what issues have so far been discussed in the meeting, and what is the expected outcome of this consular [as heard] meeting?

[Velayati] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. As you know, ten countries have participated at high level—mostly at the level of foreign ministers—in this very meeting.

In this meeting we will review what the Council of Deputies [deputy ministers] have discussed and the different committees and commissions during last year, before the third foreign ministers' meeting. And these foreign ministers' meetings have been held in Iran, in Pakistan, in Turkey, in different Central Asian countries, and the Caucasus. We have had many committees and commissions. And those committees and commissions they have made many decisions. We have to approve all these decisions. And this is the final approval. According to the Izmir Treaty, the main decisions should be made in the Council of Ministers, which consists mainly of the foreign ministers of these countries. We do hope that we can adopt a timetable for next year and all projects that we are going to fulfill in different countries in connection with the ECO.

[Correspondent] When and where will the next session of the ECO foreign ministers be held?

[Velayati] Usually, the interval between the ministerial meetings is one year. So, we expect that the next ministerial meeting will be held one year from now, after one year. But, as far as the venue of the meeting is concerned, I have to say that this decision should made during this session.

[Correspondent] Thank you very much. [end recording]

Turkey's Cetin Speaks, Departs

TA2501162294 Ankara TRT Television Network in Turkish 1100 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Correspondent report from Tehran over still of Iran map]

[Excerpts] The Economic Cooperation Organization [ECO] Fourth Ministerial Council meeting has started at Iran's capital Tehran. Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin represented Turkey at the meeting. TRT correspondent Cihat Aydemir reports from Tehran:

[Begin Aydemir recording] [passage omitted] In his speech, Cetin indicated that now that the economic cooperation framework of the ECO is established, concrete projects should be implemented. Focusing on banking, transportation, and communication, Cetin stated that the developments attained in economic cooperation would contribute to regional stability. Cetin also discussed issues such as Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Cyprus, adding that these situations should be handled in the technical committees formed within the framework of the ECO.

Holding bilateral contacts in Tehran, Cetin departed for Turkey after a morning session. The ECO Commercial and Development Bank—to be headquartered in Istanbul—is expected to be approved during the meeting which will end tomorrow. [end recording]

Pakistani Envoy Addresses Meeting

BK2601041594 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] A two-day meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization [ECO] foreign ministers began in Tehran yesterday. Addressing the meeting on behalf of Foreign Minister Najmuddin A. Shaikh, the Pakistani ambassador to Iran drew the ministerial council's attention to the atrocities being carried out by Indian forces in occupied Kashmir and the serious human rights violations there. He said that the world cannot remain a silent spectator when innocent Kashmiris are being massacred and their houses set on fire. He said that Pakistan wants a peaceful settlement of the Kashmir dispute. It will not, however, deceive the international community by holding meaningless talks.

The acting leader of the Pakistani delegation also referred to the killing of innocent citizens in Afghanistan and expressed Pakistan's grave concern in this regard. He discussed the steps Pakistan has taken to achieve the ECO's objectives, saying that the Karakoram Highway will be reinforced to withstand the heavy traffic moving from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to China.

Earlier, inaugurating the meeting, Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani highlighted the need for regional cooperation to achieve collective self-reliance and economic development.

Ministers Review Cooperation Topics

LD2501223194 Tehran IRNA in English 2055 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 25, IRNA—Foreign ministers of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) here today reviewed topics in relation to transportation and communications between the 10 member states.

A detailed plan presented by ECO's transportation ministers in Almaty last November is becoming operational now.

As Azerbaijan republic and the Central Asian states joined ECO in 1992 following their independence from Soviet rule, the organization has taken big strides in an effort to cooperate with other international organizations.

Afghan Foreign Minister Arsala proposed that ECO establish a center for surface transport and transit between member states.

Foreign minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan Gasan Gasanov said the joining of the seven new regional countries to the organization makes it all the more capable. He said mutual trust among members was necessary to promote the business ties within the ECO.

Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin said his government attaches special importance to relations with neighboring countries, while the Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan, Tuleutai I. Suleymenov, proposed the formation of a mercantile development bank of member states this year.

The Kazakh foreign minister said his country is to embark on its national development plans this year and looks forward to closer cooperation with ECO.

The Kyrgyz official to the fourth ECO foreign ministerial which opened this morning, said his country was keen on supplying member states with electricity.

The total power generation in Kyrgyzstan totals 143 billion kilowatts per hour, which he said, is a mere 10 per cent of the vast potential of the country.

Tajikistan Foreign Minister Aliyev for his part favoured the setting up of an ECO financial body and said his country will study the suggestions made at the session.

Pakistani Foreign Ministry representative, Najmuddin Shaikh, called for strengthening of infrastructural projects in member states.

The session was also attended by Uzbekistan Foreign Minister Asymov and Turkmenistan Deputy President Shikhmuradov.

Arab-Israeli Talks

Israeli, Arab Delegates Hold Talks in Washington

Rabinovich: Talks With Syria 'Positive'

TA2501120794 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 25 Jan 94 pp 1, 8

[Report from Washington by Natan Gutman]

[Excerpts] Israeli sources said that the first day of talks in Washington between the heads of the Syrian and Israeli delegations was positive. According to the sources, Muwaffaq al-'Allaf, head of the Syrian delegation, demonstrated an encouraging approach, although there was no room to talk of progress.

Itamar Rabinovich, the head of the Israeli delegation, told al-'Allaf that the two issues which the talks had focused on up til now—the question of withdrawal and the nature of peace—have already been sufficiently discussed and progress was made on them; therefore, Rabinovich would now like to move on to the issue of security arrangements on the Golan Heights. Israeli sources refused to interpret these remarks or to say whether they mean that Syria and Israel have already reached agreement with regard to withdrawal and the nature of peace. [passage omitted]

The meeting between Ambassador Itamar Rabinovich and chief Syrian negotiator Muwaffaq al-'Allaf lasted approximately 90 minutes and dealt primarily with procedural issues. Rabinovich opened the discussion by expressing condolences on behalf of the Israeli Government over the death of Basil al-Asad, son of the Syrian president. Rabinovich later sought to discuss future security arrangements on the Golan Heights. It was reported that no progress was made on this matter and that there was no change in the Syrian positions. [passage omitted]

The peace talks on the other tracks were scheduled to resume at around midnight, Israel time. Upon arrival in Washington, Elyaqim Rubinstein, head of the Israeli delegation to the talks with Jordan, said that he had brought detailed plans to fill the Jordanian-Israeli agenda with content in order to help transform it into a real peace agreement. Rubinstein was accompanied by experts in the fields of water, environmental studies, and economics.

Major General Dani Rothschild heads the Israeli team to the talks with the Palestinians. Rothschild is supposed to negotiate opposite Sa'ib 'Urayqat, his Palestinian counterpart. Rothschild reiterated the prime minister's position that no progress can be made at the Washington talks before the problems holding back the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho First agreement are resolved. The Washington talks on the Palestinian track will focus on election modalities in the territories and the powers of the autonomy council. [passage omitted]

Syria's Al-'Allaf Reiterates Position

JN2501134694 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Mr. Muwaffaq al-'Allaf, Syria's chief delegate to the Washington talks, has reiterated the parameters of the Syrian position underscored by President Hafiz al-Asa at the Geneva talks with President Bill Clinton. Mr. al-'Allaf underlined the need for a settlement embracing all Arab fronts and Syria's rejection of any proposals that do not provide for the entire Golan Heights to be handed back to Syria.

At last night's session with his Israeli counterpart Itamar Rabinovich, al-'Allaf outlined the Geneva summit proceedings and developments since.

Jordanian Delegate Reports on Talks

JN2601124394 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 26 Jan 94 pp 1, 21

[Report by Caroline Faraj]

[Text] Heads of the Arab and Israeli delegations participating in the bilateral peace negotiations are continuing their consultations and coordination meetings to discuss the possibility of holding the next round of talks at the U.S. State Department.

As State Department Deputy Spokesman Christine Shelly said on Monday [24 January], the talks on the level of heads of delegations will continue over the next few days.

Reached by telephone in Washington, Dr. Fayiz al-Tarawinah, Jordanian ambassador to the United States and head of the Jordanian delegation to the bilateral talks, told AL-RA'Y: Yesterday's talks were held separately with the head of each delegation. My meeting with chief Israeli delegate Elyaqim Rubenstein lasted only 15 minutes. It was a preparation for what we may discuss in the coming days.

Dr. al-Tarawinah stressed that on the second day of talks with the Israeli side, which will be held at the U.S. Department of State, the Jordanian side will concentrate on the clauses of the joint Jordanian-Israeli agenda, which was signed on 14 September 1993. He said: As heads of delegations, we cannot discuss the details. Therefore, talks will be confined to the agenda and to the way we can proceed along the track in the same past order, that is, in the presence of the three working groups—the water, environment, and energy group; the refugees and economy group; and the security and border group. Dr. al-Tarawinah added: When the Arabs collectively decide to begin the next round of talks, these groups will discuss topics on the Jordanian-Israeli agenda all at once and in a manner that will cover all topics.

Asked if Jordan will prioritize its talks with the Israelis by beginning with the simple issues and avoiding the controversial ones, he said: We try to avoid prioritization. The three joint working groups will discuss all issues pertaining to each committee. All in all, these issues cover all topics of the agenda. These discussions will take place at the same time because all the agenda topics are important for Jordan.

He stressed that the date of the next round has not yet been discussed between the heads of delegations and the U.S. Administration, which is sponsoring the talks.

The State Department deputy spokesman had earlier said talks between the heads of the Arab and Israeli delegations are informal, but more feasible as the parties can probe each other's ideas away from pressure.

Palestinians, Israelis Begin 'Secret' Talks

Meetings Could Replace Taba Talks

NC2501204194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2000 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 25 Jan (MENA)—Secret talks opened this evening between a Palestinian and Israeli delegation on implementing the Gaza-Jericho agreement.

The Palestinian delegation includes Ahmad Quray', alias Abu-'Ala', the head of the PLO Economic Department; Dr. Nabil Sha'th, Yasir 'Arafat's political adviser; Sa'id Kamal, the Palestinian ambassador in Cairo; and Zuhdi al-Qidrah, Fatah's representative in Cairo.

The Israeli delegation includes Yuri Savir, director general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, and Yo'el Singer, legal adviser at the Foreign Ministry.

Palestinian sources close to the meeting have stated that the talks, which have just started, might postpone the work of the Security and Civilian Affairs Committees due to be held in Taba; they could even replace them.

The Israeli delegation is carrying Yitzhaq Rabin's reply to the Palestinian paper that Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa carried to Israel on resolving differences regarding the implementation of the self-government agreement in Gaza and Jericho.

The talks are likely to continue tomorrow, probably until Thursday [27 January]. Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat is following the talks, which are being held in a hotel in the Heliopolis suburb, a few meters from his residence at the al-Andalus Palace.

'Arafat Receives Israeli Delegation

NC2601104694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0920 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 26 Jan (MENA)—At his place of residence in the al-Andalus Palace in Heliopolis today, Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat received members of the Israeli delegation to the negotiations for transferring self-rule powers to the Palestinians. Among others, the Israeli delegation includes Uri Savir, the Foreign Ministry director general; Uzi Dayan, political planning director at the Foreign Ministry; and Yo'el Singer, legal adviser at the Foreign Ministry. Attending the meeting on the Palestinian side were Dr. Nabil Sha'th, head of the Palestinian delegation in the Security Committee; Ahmad Quray', alias Abu-'Ala', chief of the PLO economic department; Sa'id Kamal, Palestinian ambassador in Cairo; Zuhdi al-Qidrah, Fatah representative in Cairo; and a number of 'Arafat's aides.

This is the first time 'Arafat has received an Israeli delegation at this level in Cairo. This meeting is intended to help reach a solution for implementing the Gaza-Jericho agreement on self-rule, which was scheduled to be implemented on 13 December. The Israeli delegation arrived in Cairo yesterday.

'Arafat Hosts Working Luncheon

NC2601124194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1218 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 26 Jan (MENA)—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has resumed his talks with Uri Savir, Israeli Foreign Ministry director general, at a working lunch hosted by 'Arafat for the Israeli delegation members at his place of residence in the al-Andalus Palace in Heliopolis. Palestinian and Israeli officials declined to give any details on the talks.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab League Chief Sees 1994 as 'Year of Peace'

*PM2501143294 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
24 Jan 94 p 3*

[Ibrahim Humaydi report: "'Abd-al-Majid Tells AL-HAYAH: 1994 Year of Peace in Region; Israel Will Withdraw Completely From Golan, Southern Lebanon"]

[Excerpts] Damascus—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has stressed that 1994 will be the year of peace in the region, "even though I do not know the mechanism of the negotiation" between the Arab and Israeli delegations. And that Israel will withdraw from the occupied Arab territories." He pointed out that the Arab states are agreed on the principle of reconciliation among themselves and that the issue of lifting the Arab boycott of Israel will be referred to the Arab League Council in March at a request from U.S. Commerce Secretary Ronald Brown because of the U.S. companies' support for the Gaza-Jericho agreement, which 'Abd-al-Majid believes a "preliminary" step toward peace.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said in a statement to AL-HAYAH that the Arab boycott still stands with regard to Israel, "because its causes still exist, namely its occupation of Arab territories."

He pointed out that U.S. Secretary Brown asked the Arab League to lift the third-degree boycott by U.S. companies that played a role in bolstering the Gaza-Jericho agreement in the context of the U.S. aid for the agreement. The "issue will be referred to the Arab League Council, because it was the council which issued the boycott decision, hence only it can revoke it." However, he stressed that the U.S. secretary did not broach the Arab boycott of Israel, which is classified as first degree, "and the Arab League Council is free to take the right decision, and we understand the U.S. request." [passage omitted]

'Abd-al-Majid said that peace "will be established this year, but I do not know the negotiation mechanism for me to say exactly when." He stressed that he has "no doubt at all that Israel will withdraw completely from the Golan, and from southern Lebanon as well." [passage omitted]

On Arab reconciliation the Arab League secretary general said that all Arab states are agreed on the reconciliation principles. "But some of them say it is not the right time and we need some measures." He said that the "the countdown for the dispute has begun, and reconciliation is a sensitive issue in every Arab country. However, there has to be openness for the sake of reconciliation, which is not impossible." [passage omitted]

Economic Reforms Fail To Stop 'Flight of Capital'

*NC2501131894 Paris AFP in English 1119 GMT
25 Jan 94*

[By Nadim Kawash]

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Jan 25 (AFP)—Arab economic reforms have failed to stop a steady flight of capital from the region due to inadequate financial policies and weak stock markets, a senior Arab economic official said on Tuesday [25 January].

As a result, overseas assets by the 22 Arab League members have far surpassed their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at a time when they badly need funds to finance reforms, said Usamah al-Faqih, chairman of the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF).

By the end of 1992, Arab investments abroad, mainly in Japan and the West, exceeded 650 billion dollars while the combined Arab GDP stood at a round 450 billion dollars, he told a conference on Arab economic reforms here.

"Despite economic achievements made in some Arab countries due to the reform programmes and efforts being exerted in others, our stock markets still need a comprehensive structural development," he said.

"There is a general weakness in the legislative and organisational structures in the markets as well as the absence of secondary exchanges, market-makers and qualified personnel in the financial, auditing and legal functions associated with the stock markets."

Only 10 of the Arab states have official exchanges but activity in such markets have remained relatively small due to political instability in some members and lack of incentives and information about trading institutions.

In the oil-rich Gulf, turnover in most of the stock markets is among the lowest in the region due to high government ownership, a tendency for long-term investment and restriction of dealing to nationals.

Egypt, Jordan, Algeria, Morocco and other Arab nations have embarked on reforms to heal their economic problems, mainly large foreign debt, slow growth, low investment, unemployment and deficits in their budgets and balance of payments. The four countries owe more than 70 percent of the total Arab debt of over 150 billion dollars.

The problems have persisted though Arab states have received more than 370 billion dollars in loans and other forms of cash over the past two decades. Experts blamed instability, mismanagment of funds and state control.

Al-Faqih, a Saudi, said his Abu Dhabi-based Fund was setting up a data base to link Arab stock markets, where around 1,100 banks and companies trade their shares, with a market capitalisation of 35 billion dollars in 1992.

He said the base, which would provide information on trading institutions in all member states, would start operation this year. He urged Arabs to step up reforms and those without stock markets to open floors.

"Despite reforms by some members, chronic deficits in the internal and external balances remain an obstacle for growth, and even stability, in Arab economies, with the latest figures showing the deficit in Arab budgets reaching around 15 percent of the GDP," he said.

"This underscores the need for redressing financial policies and developing stock markets in the Arab world in order to create a framework capable of attracting national and foreign investment and stimulating the private sector to play a greater role in economic and social development."

United Arab Emirates (UAE) minister of state for financial and industrial Affairs Ahmad al-Tayir, who opened the two-day conference, said financial policies in the region needed to be improved to ensure the success of reforms and cushion foreign influences on the domestic economy.

"Arab states, including those in the Gulf, should give financial instruments a greater role in economic growth and in reducing the impact of foreign factors like the decline in demand for their exports," he said. "This could not be done without upgrading their stock markets."

Musa Meets With Nile Basin Countries' Ministers

JN2501171794 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 23 Jan 94 pp 1, 30

["Exclusive" to AL-ITTIHAD]

[Text] Cairo—AL-ITTIHAD has learned that, during his meeting with the irrigation ministers of the Nile basin countries at the end of their technical meetings in the Egyptian capital, Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa discussed the political aspect of the Nile water issue, particularly some basin countries' cooperation with Israel in water and irrigation projects. The foreign minister voiced special interest in what is taking place in Ethiopia and Kenya, where a considerable number of Israeli irrigation and dam experts are working. He proposed that Egypt provide the two countries with Egyptian experts.

Musa told the ministers that, despite peace and reconciliation between Egypt and Israel, it is not in the basin countries' interest to permit external parties to tamper with the Nile waters.

He explained that under no circumstances would Egypt tolerate any harm to its water resources because this is "a life or death issue" for Egypt. Therefore, he added, it is better for experts from Egyptian and the other Nile basin countries to cooperate to implement projects in these countries, as such a cooperation will ensure the interests of the countries in which projects are implemented, as well as those of Egypt in which the Nile river ends. Employing Israeli or European experts, he said, may open the door for foreign interests to play a destructive role in the water issue.

The Egyptian foreign minister pointed out that his country had informed all parties involved, including Israel and the big powers, that the Nile waters issue is not a subject of any Middle East multilateral negotiations or any Middle East cooperation in the water area and that it concerns no one except the basin countries themselves.

In another development, Egyptian Irrigation Minister Engineer 'Abd-al-Hadi Radi told AL-ITTIHAD that alleged reports from Khartoum, or other capitals, on Sudan requesting new negotiations on sharing the Nile water by Egypt and Sudan are absolutely unfounded.

Islamic Affairs

Al-Turaybi on U.S., Terrorist Accusations, FIS

BR2501123894 Paris LE FIGARO in French 25 Jan 94 p 4

[Interview with Hasan al-Turaybi, general secretary of the Arab-Islamic People's Conference, by Pierre Darcourt in Khartoum; date not given—first two paragraphs are LE FIGARO introduction]

[Text] The Manshiyah district of Khartoum, in the eastern part of the Sudanese capital. A sober building bedecked with bright red bougainvilleas. This is the home of Shaykh Hasan al-Turaybi, general secretary of the Arab Islamic People's Conference. The man the Western chancelleries, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia accuse of "leading a veritable Islamic International from the Middle East to the Maghreb," led us into a drawing room with walls covered with verses from the Koran. His slender figure was wrapped in a wide white galabiyah, his bronzed face framed with a neatly trimmed gray beard, his head covered with a silky turban, his smile was dazzling and his eyes sparkling with intelligence.

During three hours of conversation, this linguist who is regarded as an authority among well-read people in the Muslim world, spoke in excellent French interspersed with unexpected signs of humor. It is difficult to imagine that this affable, erudite person, holder of a masters' degree from Oxford University and a doctorate in law from the Sorbonne, should be regarded as one of the most dangerous men in the world, the leader of a "new empire of evil" in Washington's eyes.

[Darcourt] Who are you, Shaykh al-Turaybi?

[Al-Turaybi] It is for you to choose. For my enemies I am the "green devil," the "guru" of Islamic extremism. For my friends, I am Shaykh al-Turaybi, a title which the Sudanese confer on a man of age and knowledge, a man of religion. To understand better who I am, I must talk about my background. I was born on 1 February 1932 in Kassala in north-east Sudan, a village close to the Ethiopian border, by a whim of the itinerant career of my father, who for 30 years had the job of qadi, or Muslim judge. My father had graduated from the faculty of religious sciences in Omdurman, which explains my attraction to Koranic and legal studies.

Our family is descended from a famous line of religious dignitaries. My ancestor Daf'allah, a renowned sufi, created a Koranic school in the center of the country, frequented by many disciples, and founded the village of Turaybi which has born his name for 300 years. My wife Wisal al-Madi is the direct descendant of Muhammad Ahmad, the Great Madi, who swept the British troops from Khartoum in 1885. It was during those terrible assaults that Gordon, British governor general of Sudan, was killed. The Madi had called on his faithful, the al-Ansar, to fight against "the foreign infidels and the impious Turks" to establish in Sudan the kingdom of God based on the precepts of the Koran. The first Sudanese nationalism was born with him.

[Darcourt] You studied abroad for seven years. Which impressed you most, Britain or France?

[Al-Turaybi] France, without any doubt. I spent two years in Britain. Long enough to complete a master's degree and no more. And I continued my studies in Paris. At that time, going to France was already an act of independence in opposition to the British colonialists. The whole Sudanese elite was then focused on London. English was still the official state language. I stayed in France from 1959 to 1964. My wife was with me and speaks excellent French. We have six children and our first son was born in Paris. During my stay, I was struck by the courtesy of the teachers and the comradeship of the students. There was no segregation. I was excited by the richness and precision of the French language, the culture, the history of the revolution, the relations between church and state, and the study of the different constitutions. I was not focused exclusively on my law studies. I went to the national library, I visited museums. During the university vacations, I went to Strasbourg, Toulouse, and Albi, to Germany, and Italy. I think that the world is like a book of which you have only read the first page until you have left your own country.

[Darcourt] How did you enter politics?

[Al-Turaybi] My first public engagement was to launch a campaign for the emancipation of Sudanese women and to give them the right to vote. I thought that they should play a full part in building a new Islamic society, well-anchored in its century. They also needed to be taken from the exclusive confinement to domestic tasks. It was a difficult enterprise, but those reforms succeeded.

[Darcourt] You are the founder of the Arab-Islamic People's Conference, which holds its congress in Khartoum each year. Are you satisfied with its work?

[Al-Turaybi] The scale of this meeting is a unique event in history. More than 500 delegates representing 56 countries from four continents—Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America—took part in it. Nobody was excluded. Among the delegates were around 20 leaders of the Sunni clergy; muftis from Bosnia, Greece, and Albania; the rector of the Grand Mosque in Paris; German imams; several mullahs; imams from the United States, and others—Belgians, Spanish, French—many women; and even 12 American bishops in the framework of the Church-Islam dialogue which we launched last year. This conference primarily aimed to mobilize the largest number of groups and prominent individuals to reconcile the Muslims divided among the four corners of the world and unite them in face of those who are relentlessly hostile to them. Consensus was reached on a firm will: To raise the idea of God in face of American society in which the supremacy of commercial materialism backed by an overwhelming military power leaves room for no faith in divine law.

[Darcourt] During the conference, the United States was clearly named as "Islam's mortal enemy..."

[Al-Turaybi] The arrogance of the United States which has become the only world superpower offends us. It subjects countries which refuse to bow to its diktats to a harsh economic blockade. This is true of Sudan, which is deprived of all development aid, and blacklisted for "violation of human rights and collaboration with terrorist organizations."

[Darcourt] This is also true of Libya...

[Al-Turaybi] The situation is different. Nobody is accusing us of having blown up airplanes, and we respect the embargo. Colonel al-Qadhdhafi has been in power for a quarter of a century. He started his national socialist revolution inspired by al-Nasir, then he launched his revolution of the Little Green Book. He apparently no longer believes in it. His current preoccupation is to unite the tribes. But the Americans are stepping up the pressure on his entourage and will continue to stifle Libya. This is only a remark, but al-Qadhdhafi is likely to end up in the next cell to General Noriega, the former dictator of Panama.

[Darcourt] Sudan is regarded as one of the hubs of international terrorism...

[Al-Turaybi] These accusations are unfounded. Sudan, devastated by a civil war which has been going on for 10 years and which is costing it $1 million per day, does not have the money or material resources to maintain guerrillas abroad in Egypt or Algeria. On the other hand, where U.S. interests lie, attacks on democracy are never condemned. Take the example of Saudi Arabia: It is a country without a constitution in which nobody votes, governed for more than 60 years by an absolute monarchy, the king and...3,500 princes of the blood covered with dollars. For the Americans, Saudi Arabia, the main holder of the world's crude oil reserves, is an untouchable preserve.

[Darcourt] France was not attacked once during the conference...

[Al-Turaybi] We have no complexes about France. It did not colonize Sudan. France has major assets for becoming the preferred interlocutor of the Muslim peoples once again—its feeling for law, its influence in Africa, its knowledge of the Arab world, and its advanced technology. We are happy that our government chose Air France, and not British Airways, to serve Khartoum; Paris, and not London, as the main stop; and that Sudan Airways, our national company, bought Airbus planes and not Boeings.

[Darcourt] Among the delegations invited to the conference were several members of the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front], of whom Abdallah Hannas was the spokesman. The FIS' armed groups are stepping up summary executions of foreigners on Algerian territory...

[Al-Turaybi] This conflict is starting in the same way as the FLN's [National Liberation Front] Algerian war, by assassinations, outbreaks of violence, and very harsh police repression. Every time I met a member of the FIS I always said to him: "Have you spoken with France?" He replied: "Out of the question." I insisted: "You must talk, open a dialogue. Your country is in danger of breaking up. If you come to power by force, 3 million or even 4 million Algerians will probably flee like boat people to the French coast."

France, already disturbed by the problem of immigrants, will not be able to receive them. This chaos must be avoided, a compromise must be found, and an agreement reached. For the time being, you see, these armed groups are not controlled, the FIS is a passionate movement without a precise program and not yet structured. The first line is harsh. The second line is intelligent. After two years of discussion, I have been able to persuade them to talk with France and the FLN. Serious contacts have taken place in Germany, in the United States, and in Sudan. The civil war is a bad fever which must be brought down at all costs.

Palestinian Affairs

Al-Husayni Accuses Israel of Expropriating Land

TA2501140194 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 25 Jan 94 p A4

[Report by territories correspondent Yosi Torpstein]

[Text] Speaking at a news conference at al-Watani Hotel in East Jerusalem, Faysal al-Husayni, who recently returned from a visit to Saudi Arabia said: "The main goal of the Palestinian delegation in negotiations with Israel is to establish an interim rule that will incorporate the foundations for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the future," noting that "no amount of pressure or repressive policies, such as land expropriation and the systematic violation of the spirit of the agreement will help Israel prevent this, and Israel must take this fat into account if it seeks to achieve real peace. If the peace process fails," al-Husayni asserted, "this will not be good for the future of democracy in Israel or for the country's very existence." Al-Husayni explained that "Israel may be able to enforce its presence to a certain degree in the future by using force; however, it should bear in mind that whoever lives by the sword is also destined to die by the sword." At the news conference, Israel was accused of systematically expropriating land in the territories and expanding settlements, even after the signing of the Declaration of Principles with the Palestinians on 13 September.

The news conference was organized by four bodies, including the Palestine Geographic Research and Information Center, which belongs to the East Jerusalem association of Arab studies headed by al-Husayni; the Palestine Human Rights Information Center; The Saint Ives Society for Human Rights (a Catholic organization); and the committee for land research.

The representatives of these bodies accused Israel of expropriating 46,000 dunams along the Green Line and around Jerusalem for military and public use after the document of principles had already been signed, of expanding the settlements of Daniyel and Bet El by another 1,025 dunams. They also claimed that Israel had set up eight nature reserves on the West Bank, paved eight roads leading to settlements; initiated two development projects, encompassing 5,520 dunams, in settlements in the Hebron area; and forcibly evicted 46 extended families from the expropriated lands as well as destroying 63 houses.

The Palestinians claimed that Israel was employing three main methods to implement its settlement policies, which indicated that it had no intention of withdrawing from the territories. One of these methods focuses on development activity and on formulating new master plans to expand existing settlements (for example plans that were prepared for the settlements of 'Anatot, Tapuah, Qedumim, and Qiryat Arba').

Another method is defining certain areas as "nature reserves," "green areas," and "open areas," in order to prevent the Palestinians from using the land for agriculture and construction purposes. The areas that were so defined, the Palestinian representatives claimed, are later used to build settlements. The Palestinians gave Rekhes Shu'fat as an example. This settlement was first defined as a "nature reserve" and later used to construct homes for ultra-Orthodox Jews.

The Palestinians complained that since the signing of the Oslo agreement, numerous wide-ranging plans for an Israeli "Greater Jerusalem" have been formulated in a similar fashion, while the Palestinians are being prohibited to build in these areas. They pointed out that since September 1993, eight areas near Ramallah, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Hebron, and Nabulus have been declared natural reserves.

The third method used by Israel is based on laying the infrastructure for the future expansion of settlements and their linkage with Israel.

Al-Husayni To Head East Jerusalem Council

TA2501192994 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Dr. Mahdi 'Abd-al-Hadi, head of the Palestinian Institute for International Affairs, disclosed today that preparations are currently under way on the local level to set up a Palestinian council, headed by Faysal al-Husayni, to run the affairs of the Arab residents in East Jerusalem. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that this council will form a link between the self-rule's Palestinian National Authority and East Jerusalem's inhabitants.

Official Discusses Needs of Palestinian Economy

NC2501141194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1200 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Damascus, 25 Jan (MENA)—A Palestinian official has praised Egypt's experiment in building new cities, adding that a Palestinian technical team will visit Cairo shortly to discuss this experiment with a view to applying it in Gaza and the West Bank. He noted that the Palestinian National Authority intends to build 13 new cities in Gaza, the West Bank, and Jericho areas.

Dr. Zuhdi al-Nashashibi, PLO Executive Committee member and head of the PLO Economic Department, has noted that the Palestinian economy is in bad shape as a result of the destruction sustained by the infrastructure at the hands of the Israeli occupation authorities.

Speaking to a MENA correspondent, Dr. al-Nashashibi pointed out that the first stage of rebuilding the infrastructure requires more than $365 million. He added: We need 80,000 housing units urgently to provide housing for low-income people, who suffer from a major housing problem.

On the economic development projects in Palestine, Dr. al-Nashashibi pointed out that a Palestinian bank for industrial development will be set up with a capital of $100 million. He added: We have prepared an investment law and a law for companies, and we welcome private and joint enterprises by Arab investors. He noted that the port of Gaza will be modernized and a floating dock will be urgently built, adding that the Netherlands has agreed to share 40 percent of the costs of this project, which amounts to $50 millions. He noted that contacts are under way with Spain, the Netherlands, Germany, France, Britain, and Greece to finance infrastructure projects separate from those financed by the World Bank.

Dr. al-Nashashibi stressed that the Palestinians are in urgent need of 130 megawatts of electricity in Gaza and 220 megawatts on the West Bank, noting that there are contacts with Egypt in this regard.

On Palestinian-U.S. relations, the Palestinian official noted that the Americans have promised to consider financing some projects other than those financed by the World Bank and the donor countries. They also promised to abrogate all laws enacted by Congress banning dealings with the Palestinians, to give Palestinian officials a chance to meet with U.S. businessmen, and to open U.S. markets to Palestinian products, he added.

Concluding his remarks, Dr. al-Nashashibi added: We need to create 50,000 jobs urgently. He noted that there are 100,000 unemployed, representing 75 percent of the work force. He added: We will conclude an economic agreement with Egypt soon to encourage Egyptian construction companies to carry out projects in the West Bank and Gaza.

Dr. al-Nashashibi left Damascus at noon today after taking part in the meetings of the Arab Agricultural Development Organization, which concluded its work here last night.

Federations' Headquarters To Move to Self-Rule Area

TA2501182794 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 25 Jan 94 p 6

[Excerpt] AL-NAHAR has learned that the PLO has decided to transfer the headquarters of popular federations from Tunis to Gaza and Jericho upon taking over power from the Israelis.

It is worth noting that Tunis became the headquarters of eight Palestinian federations following the PLO's departure from Beirut in 1983. They are the federations of writers; lawyers and jurists; teachers, women, workers, engineers; doctors, pharmacists, and dentists, and farmers. [passage omitted]

Fatah Demands End to Gaza Interrogations, Killings

TA2501170894 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 25 Jan 94 p 1

[By special AL-QUDS correspondent]

[Text] Gaza—Fatah yesterday stressed its principled opposition to the interrogations and killings being carried out in the Gaza Strip. The organization states this should only be done through a general and national agreement based on a centralized leadership decision to preserve the Palestinian cause.

In a statement distributed in Gaza, Fatah reiterated its demand from all organizational cadres to halt such acts because they harm the people's interests. It called on the Palestinian people, including all their popular organizations, to be alert and aware, with extreme patriotism, of all the conditions around them.

Three PLO Factions To Formulate Action Program

TA2501171494 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 24 Jan 94 pp 1, 7

[By 'Abd-al-Ra'uf Arna'ut]

[Excerpt] Jerusalem—Three Palestinian factions allied within the PLO's framework and supportive of the peace process and the recent Palestinian-Israeli agreement have declared their intention to formulate a joint action program that enhances their joint role in defense of the PLO, supports their political positions, and develops popular rallying around those positions.

In a statement issued yesterday by their representatives, Fatah, the Palestinian People's Party, and Fida [Palestinian Democratic Union] announced that an expanded and urgent leadership meeting will be held to discuss and approve the joint action paper and create a suitable mechanism for implementing it to encompass all regions and principal organizations belonging to the three factions. [passage omitted]

Hamas Official: 'Arafat-Fahd Meeting 'Artificial'

JN2601120394 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 26 Jan 94 pp 1, 16

[Report by Riyad Mansur in Amman]

[Excerpt] The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, has stated that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's meeting with King Fahd was not genuine, but artificial. It added that the Tunis [PLO] leadership thinks the world supports it at a time when the Palestinian Oslo group began to split up. Hamas said the U.S. Administration is trying to activate the Syrian track to make up for the stalled Palestinian track.

Official Hamas Spokesman Engineer Ibrahim Ghawshah urged Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi to join the Palestinian opposition because it is the origin. He accused Faysal al-Husayni of representing a phenomenon opposed to that of his father. He urged him to stop following this path and return to the road followed by 'Abd-al-Qadir al-Husayni, the martyr of Palestine.

Ghawshah told SAWT AL-SHA'B that no force can prevent Hamas from performing its duty and struggling against the Israeli occupation. [passage omitted]

Hamas Denies Links to Attacks by Egyptian Fundamentalists

TA2501171194 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 24 Jan 94 p 4

[Text] London, QUDS PRESS—A Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] spokesman has denied Hamas' connection in any way with attacks launched by fundamentalists against government targets in Egypt.

A responsible Hamas source said that talk about Hamas' link with a captured fugitive in an ambush set up by the Egyptian police in Cairo's suburbs last week is totally fabricated and baseless. This sort of talk is devoid of logic and credibility and falls within framework of the deliberate campaign of distortion against Hamas' positions in the Arab world.

The source reiterated that Hamas' armed activity is limited to resisting Israel. He pointed out that Hamas does not carry out this sort of activity against any Arab or foreign party. Such activity is not a Hamas strategy.

PFLP-GC 'Martyred Heroes' Burial Reported

JN2301191994 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 23 Jan 94

[Excerpts] At 1600 today, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC] laid its four martyred heroes to rest at the martyrs cemetery in al-Yarmuk Camp south of Damascus. [passage omitted]

The four were martyred as they were putting up resistance to vicious Zionist raids on the Muqlat positions of the front in Lebanon, used as humanitarian and social welfare centers. [passage omitted]

People's Party Member Discusses Taba Talks

JN2501110194 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 25 Jan 94 p 14

[Interview with Taysir 'Aruri, member of the Political Bureau of the Palestinian People's Party by 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Khatib; place and date not given]

[Excerpt] [Al-Khatib] In your opinion, why have the Taba talks faltered, and what solution do you propose?

['Aruri] I think that the impasse in the Taba negotiations is caused by the very nature of the agreement reached in Oslo between the Palestinian and Israeli sides. This agreement allows for many interpretations. In addition, the Declaration of Principles was drafted hastily, since the negotiators in Oslo were in a hurry to announce it. Moreover, the impasse is a result of the way the negotiations are being conducted and the fact that the Israeli side is seeking more and more concessions. We should not be surprised if the negotiations in Taba and elsewhere face similar problems and if the Palestinian side offers more concessions. I hope that this will not happen.

What worries me most about the ongoing negotiations is the question of the Israeli settlements in the Oslo agreement. I am not playing down the question of the crossings and others, since this question has to do with sovereignty. However, transforming the Gaza settlements from an isolated, separate area into a connected area, regardless of the name, will certainly entrench the existence of these settlements on the ground. Let alone the territories that will be added to these settlements to form a so-called security belt. This is the most serious question in the Taba talks. I regret to say that this question is not being given enough attention.

[Al-Khatib] So you are not optimistic at all?

['Aruri] The way the negotiations are being conducted by the Palestinian side bodes an uncomfortable future which raises many fears regarding the progress of negotiations and the future solution.

[Al-Khatib] The Palestinian People's Party has a certain view of President Yasir 'Arafat's unchallenged control of the negotiations. This prompted your party to withdraw from the negotiations committee. What are you going to do if President 'Arafat continues to pursue this approach? Do you have any plans to talk to the 10 factions?

['Aruri] You should not forget that our position originally stems from our party's support for the peace process and the negotiations as a means of resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict. We also subscribe to the Madrid terms. We still think that the peace process could lead to a Palestinian state and to national independence if the Palestinian side acts wisely. Therefore, our dispute with President 'Arafat and the parties to the negotiations has to do with the approach and how the negotiations are being conducted. If the negotiations are not carefully conducted, then this will have dire consequences for the Palestinian people. We support those who are against the Declaration of Principles, since this idea is open to all possibilities, starting with bolstering occupation and ending with independence and the establishment of a state. It is our job, therefore, to change the way the political process is being conducted and to change the decisionmaking process. Toward this end, we are prepared to talk to our allies in Fatah and to talk to all other Palestinian forces. We do not believe in boycott as a form of political action. We are prepared to talk to everybody, including the 10 factions. However, we will talk to them as one faction and not as a group. Our party does not plan at all to join the group of 10. [passage omitted]

PLO Urged To Coordinate With Syria, Jordan

TA2501183194 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 24 Jan 94 p 2

[Editorial: "Beware of Lack of Coordination with Damascus and Amman]

[Text] All elements of the Arab negotiating side have their significance, role, and centrality in the peace process. The key to peace is not only in the hands of the Palestinian element. This fact should not be absent from the minds of the Palestinian leadership, which signed an agreement with Israel before the others. This signing does not mean that we should ignore the importance of coordination with the Arab side's other elements, foremost of all Amman and Damascus. Enhanced coordination with Jordan and Syria must continue and proceed on the highest levels. Any rift with this or that side should be avoided and no issue or stance should outweigh the importance of coordination with the Jordanian and Syrian sides.

True, the Palestinian side's decisionmaking is independent, but this does not mean that the Palestinian leadership should "turn its back" on fraternal Syria and Jordan. A rift with them or sufficing with a fragile and pretentious coordination harms the Palestinian cause and position and gives Israel an additional opportunity to pursue positions rejected by the Palestinian side. Moreover, rifts and lack of coordination constitute an element of pressure in Israel's hands against the Palestinian side. Beware of hostility with Damascus and beware of lack of strong and serious coordination with Amman.

Opposition Factions Urged To End 'National Loss'

JN2601134594 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 25 Jan 94

["Political commentary" by Yahya Rabah, Palestinian representative in Sanaa: "Illusions of Exile and Realities of the Homeland"]

[Text] By now, the Palestinian opposition factions must have realized, beyond any doubt or ambiguity, that the PLO-Israeli Declaration of Principles agreement is an established fact, and that the ceiling of the required and legitimate struggle is how to embody the Palestinian reading of this agreement to try to rid it of its drawbacks and build on its positive aspects in the interest of the Palestinian people.

Speaking about foiling the agreement is no more than talk meant to justify avoiding the battle waged by the Palestinian people now to establish their national entity, lay the foundations of an independent Palestinian state, and open all practical, objective doors toward achieving all Palestinian rights.

We hope that our brothers in the Palestinian opposition factions would end their escape, based on the following facts:

First, the room for maneuver of these factions is getting smaller, despite their recent statement in which they said that the Palestine question is an Islamic and pan-Arab affair. All Arab and Islamic countries, in line with their interests and strategies, deal with this question, at best, through a national and regional perspective. Perhaps, we are now at the threshold of a stage in which these factions will not find a place for their own security except in a Palestinian safe haven.

Second, it is the policy of these factions to adhere to form rather than substance, and this cannot last long. We have noticed that, during the recent meetings of these factions, they avoided discussing any issues of substance.

They only agreed on formalities that do not give an accurate reflection of reality, such as the illusion that collective leadership and democratic action lie only in equal representation and periodic leadership. To stress that this question has to do with formalities and is not in line with reality, we say that the alliance between the Democratic Front [for the Liberation of Palestine] and the Popular Front [for the Liberation of Palestine] on the one hand and Hamas on the other, which was implemented during the Bi'r Zayt University elections, was not observed in the elections of the Islamic University in Gaza. This is a natural thing. The Hamas Movement, for example, would not play the game of an alliance in form only all the time. This is in light of its size. This means that hard realities shall always conquer weak alliances.

Third, Palestinian public opinion wants the Palestinian factions to gear their national resistance capabilities toward development by adopting a practical approach for action, and not by escape. This is especially true since the banner of Palestinian national dialogue is held high by the legitimate leadership of the Palestinian people, the PLO leadership, and by a major, broad current of our people, particularly in the main arena of the homeland itself.

Based on the above, we wish the Palestinian opposition factions would end their state of national loss, which they brought on themselves as a result of adhering to the language and conduct of the past and as a result of their dependence on realities which they thought are fixed and would not change. The truth is these realities are changeable and complex.

Whatever they do, the opposition factions are part of our national struggle and entity, and we care for this part. We do not want to see those factions blown away by the winds outside time and space. We do not want the Palestinian opposition to establish their existence on an illusory island which is, in reality, the back of a sleeping crocodile that will awake and drown the illusory island. Yes, the banner of dialogue and participation is held high. For the first time in history, we, Palestinians, are going to a homeland of our own that carries our name to start our life. Perhaps reality does not match one's expectations. However, participation in building the homeland, no matter how modest, is a thousand times better than illusory heroism in alliances in exile, which will not last long.

South Asian Regional Affairs

Members' Tension Not To Affect SAARC Progress

BK2001124094 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 20 Jan 94

[Text] The new secretary general of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation [SAARC] has said that tension between member nations will not affect the group's progress. Yadav Kant Silwal, the forum's new secretary general, said at a briefing at the Overseas Correspondents Association in Bangladesh that regional tensions have not affected the other groupings and there is no reason why it would affect SAARC. He said that he saw no reason why contentious bilateral issues should affect SAARC and added that it was prospering despite these (?problems). He had talks with Bangladeshi Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, who is current chairperson of SAARC, on Tuesday [18 January].

Algeria

Ali Kafi Addresses National Conference

LD2501155994 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1015 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Speech by Ali Kafi, chairman of the Higher State Council, at the opening of the national conference on consensus at the Club des Pins in Algiers—live]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Prayers and peace be upon the noblest of messengers.

Ladies and gentlemen: We are meeting here today at the national consensus conference to continue the dialogue which we started in September 1992. We are hoping that dialogue at this conference will reach its desired goal; that is, the removal of the country from the current crisis in order that normal life, tranquillity, and peace may return to Algeria, which will then be able to continue its development process in an atmosphere of security. My Lord, make this land secure [Koranic verse].

I am sure that this is the expectation and the yearning of all Algerians who are placing their hopes in our conference. Hence, it is our duty to rise to our responsibility and deliver what is required.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Higher State Council [HCE] has shouldered its responsibilities during a very difficult stage. [Words indistinct] it has to face up to a complicated and critical situation which resulted from the poor management of the transition to democracy brought about by the Constitution of February 1989. This laid down a new political system for building the state, for the management of the country, and for the organization of the political society. This was in addition to the roots of the crisis which led to the tragic October events and the elements of which continued in existence. The absence of control over the new political system led to the haphazard application of the Constitution, which made the situation more critical. The organization of the election contest, whether at the local or the national level, showed the fragility of the administration and the state structures, leading us to chaos. The logic of the street overcame the logic of the state and opened the way to all possible pitfalls. All this led to the crisis of the establishments resulting from the resignation of the head of state by the end of the term of office of the People's National Council. This required the setting up of the HCE with the aim of guaranteeing the continuation of the state and completing the remaining legislative term. The urgent and circumstantial conditions that the HCE faced and the critical situation that existed then did not make the HCE cut short its task by merely covering the constitutional vacuum. It had to address the real problems of the country, clarify views with the political, economic, and social partners as well as the national cadres, search for ways of liquidating the crisis at its roots, and prepare the conditions for the creation of a qualitative transformation in the country's march.

We found ourselves facing a political crisis which had resulted from a lack of control over the transition process, the strong and active presence of elements and practices of the previous regime, as well as the ossified mentalities which fear and reject change. We were also facing an economic crisis, the main features of which were heavy debts, stagnant economic growth, and inefficient enterprises in addition to smuggling and speculation which are bidding to dominate the markets. We were also facing an acute social crisis represented in the great delay in any response to the needs of the population, particularly in the spheres of employment and housing; this has been a cause of concern to young people and has led to a loss of confidence in the future.

While we were facing this multifaceted crisis, the tragic assassination of the martyr Mohamed Boudiaf, may God bless his soul, took place. He was one of the prominent leaders of the 1 November revolution who gave his life for the sake of our dear homeland's advancement. [passage omitted]

With that tragedy there was an escalation of savage terrorism, destructive to the country's material, human, and moral resources and aimed at blocking the path to any real effort to find effective solutions to the complex problems we are facing. Terrorism has created a security situation that is threatening the nation's unity and destiny.

This tragic situation did not discourage the HCE from going ahead with dealing with the crisis at its roots. The HCE initiated a wide and comprehensive dialogue with political parties, popular organizations, associations, and national figures. The option was neither circumstantial nor tactical; it was a strategic option and a cautious attitude toward political practice, running the government, and organizing social relations.

We were aware from the outset that dialogue was the more difficult path to take, but it was the right path to deal with the roots of the crisis and prevent its repetition. Serious and difficult dialogue requires patience and stamina, enabling us to instill the concepts and culture of dialogue and overcome violent methods in every field of social and political activity.

Dialogue was very difficult in an atmosphere of violence and terror, which was destructive, and in a difficult security situation. It required us to leave the concept of a single party and monopoly behind and enter the era of pluralism which dictates, by its very nature, the acceptance of conflicting and contradicting ideas and proposals.

Despite the will and the determination of the HCE to make the national dialogue successful and allow it to attain its sought after aims, however, some parties, with much regret, have taken a negative attitude toward the dialogue; they have even boycotted the conference. By such a stance, they are trying to make the nation miss a golden opportunity. They have put their narrow partisan calculations, even personal ones, before the interests of the nation. Such a stance runs counter to the concept of democracy we have been trying to implement.

In these decisive circumstances in the history of the nation, we place the responsibility before national public opinion, which is aspiring to security and stability. Despite all of this we continued the dialogue with insistence and methodology. And here we are meeting today, thanks to that conduct, in a national conference for reconciliation. This in itself is a great acheivement we should cherish and take care of.

In the midst of the economic crisis and its pressing elements, while the critical economic situation was imposing itself forcefully and urgently, and after extensive studies and wide consultations, the HCE had furnished the tools that enable our economy to rise again on modern bases and criteria. It passed the new investment law which is characterised by flexibility, encouragement, and adequate guarantees for national and foreign investment.

In response to economic and social partners, the HCE issued a law on the setting up of a national economic and social council as an extensive and appropriate framework for consultations on and dealing with various issues posed by national development during a phase of transition to a new economic system, taking into consideration the principle of social justice and the state of the underprivileged groups in society. It made the appropriate decisions regarding the management of debts with international financial institutions and the provision of fresh possibilities to stimulate the national economy. [passage omitted]

In the international domain, and proceeding from this promising starting point, we have taken part in all important regional and international meetings. We have resisted the attempts to isolate our country which were made by some parties who exploited the temporary crisis through which the country is passing.

The pressure of events and the impetuous reactions and passions which they generate have not diverted the HCE from exerting the efforts necessary to overcome the present difficulties and from searching for a new proposal for running the country on scientific, technological, rational, and modern foundations.

The transition to this new proposal makes it necessary for sincere patriots to face up to the basic challenges and all the exertions, patience, courage, creative thought, and working methods that they demand. We have been able to face up to the situation by mobilizing the dynamic forces of the country and sincere citizens.

On this occasion, we pay our respects to the martyrs of violence and terrorism and we praise the Armed Forces, the security services, the cadres, the workers, and the citizens who are determined that the state will continue and that institutions and the country's affairs will go on as normal.

Ladies and gentlemen: Regardless of what is being said about the present situation and notwithstanding the difficulties facing us, the current problems are more than just problems of the power struggle; they are in reality problems of a society in transformation, a society that greatly aspires to qualitative changes and to a comprehensive development—a society which ought to reconsider itself in order to find the best means for organizing its life and bring about progress and prosperity to its members.

This shows that the crisis is not an easy one; it also shows the enormity of the efforts which have to be exerted in order to resolve it. However, such a solution will not be found through a decree, through some improvised measures, or during a short period, nor will it be within the power of a single group or bloc; it should be carried out by the nation as a whole. It will not be attained through a comprehensive and long-term strategy.

It is, however, obvious that such a solution will, inevitably, only take place once institutional problems have been resolved through the holding of multiparty presidential and legislative elections within the framework of the new political framework which we have been trying to establish upon the principles of republicanism. These principles which have unanimously been agreed upon, and stipulate pluralism, freedom of the press, individual and collective freedoms, human rights, and the alternatn of the principle of power by holding general elections.

The organizing of the election contest on these bases and principles is the method which leads to the solving of the institutional problem, and this is the target of the transitional phase which has become acceptable by way of dialogue as means for reaching a national consensus. In order to succeed in this experiment and build the new political system it is inevitable that we should confront the following challenges:

1. Our capability to overcome the security challenge, as without the liquidation of violence, the restoration of security, and the country's stability, it is impossible to realize democracy no matter what efforts we make, irrespective of our intentions.

2. As for the building of a modern strong state, how can we build the state and give it its status and at the same time consolidate democracy? The state is a system and a collection of behavior patterns and values. Also democracy, the building of a democratic system cannot be done in a fragile state, nor the building of a strong developed state without a democratic system.

3. How can we build democracy and realize the development project? There can be no development without democracy which permits the full usage of the nation's energies and capabilities. There can be no democracy in deteriorating economic and social situations.

4. Our initiative in building a democratic system and a developed generation deeply rooted in the nation, and infiltrating the values and identity of our people, is a

system which will not be isolated from positive international experiments. This means that we create the change which is imposed by the transformation currently taking place at the national and international levels, boycott the past methods and practices, and at the same time maintain our foundations, experience, and historic origin.

5. Define, establish and consolidate Algeria's position in the new world order which is about to take shape amid the ongoing stormy changes and ways of enabling it to assume its normal role as an active and effective state at the international level. This requires response to all the challenges. It would be possible to build our own special and creative experience through these challenges in the framework of the development of modern human experiences. Success will not be a gain only for Algerians; the same as the great 1 November revolution, it will be a gain for all the peoples aspiring to freedom. It is neither our right nor anyone else's right to be the reason for depriving the Algerian people of achieving this pioneering experience.

Ladies and gentlemen, the building of the political system which we are endeavoring to construct and the overcoming of the challenges we are facing constitute a basis for the evolving national project [mashru'] to the building of which all Algerians are contributing. The national project draws its strength and its principles from the spirit of the evolving 1 November revolution.

It is certain that our success in moving to the new political system and in establishing a successful democracy in security, prosperity, and stability is a fresh rebirth or a rebirth and a renewal of the 1 November eternal revolution.

Ladies and gentlemen, all the difficulties not withstanding, the Algerians are against adventurism and violence. They are capable of conducting dialogue and living in security in the shadow of national unity. They are committed to their faith and tradition, and are open to the outside world. They are heading with confidence towards the future.

Today at this conference we all have to rise to the level of our historic responsibility and leave behind personal and temporary accounts regardless of their justifications. We have to work with a unified and profound will to get the country out of the current situation and take it to the land of safety. All of us bear full responsibility in that respect.

The conference is not the end of dialogue. The dialogue will continue in all forms and with the spirit of honesty, credibility, and responsibility. We have to firmly establish the principles of dialogue, consultation, and solidarity and to eliminate once and for all all manifestations of violence which are alien to our society, religion, and homeland and sow the seeds of hope. We have no right to deny the Algerians males and females this hope. May God guide us toward the good of our nation and the unity and safety of our homeland and may peace and God's compassion and blessings be upon you.

Interior Minister Addresses National Conference

LD2501163094 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1122 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Address by Interior Minister Selim Saadi at the opening of the national conference on consensus at the Club des Pins in Algiers—live]

[Text] In the name of God the merciful, the compassionate, prayers and peace be upon the noblest messenger.

President of the Higher State Council [HCE], Chairman of the national conference, sisters and brothers. The multifold crisis that our country is currently experiencing is the result of the bankruptcy of the management, the political management of the country during the last decade. The violation of the basic rules of political management, whether consciously or unconsciously, for a long time has led to the deterioration of the state and its apparatus. For over a decade, improvisation, demagoguery, and manipulation have become part of the system of government. Moreover, the economic, social, and cultural reform process, which the country went through during the sixties and seventies, despite some setbacks, and which was an important gain for our people, has gradually become a subject of retraction through illogical and irresponsible acts and behavior.

The weakening, unsettlement, and deterioration of government have led to its retreat and return to political, economic, social, and cultural backwardness, as well as to the widespread absence of security. The security situation that was prevalent on the eve of the declaration of the state of emergency in most of the provinces, particularly in the great residential complexes, was a source of concern for various reasons. The public security was threatened alongside the deterioration of the public authorities' capabilities and the prevalence of chaos and confusion in all sectors. Faced by this rapid deterioration of the political, social, and security atmosphere, the national forces—aware of the fatal danger that was lurking over Algeria—decided to halt this destructive process and declared a state of emergency. Despite the noticeable progress as a result of declaring a state of emergency to restore law and order, the forces of evil have not stopped. They have committed terrorist, barbaric, and destructive crimes, some of which I recall: the assassination of the government's representatives, war veterans and martyrs' sons; the assassination of ordinary citizens, men, women, mothers, children, young and elderly; the assassination of foreign nationals who came to our country to contribute to the economy of the country; the plundering and sabotage acts against financial institutes, post offices, and public and private enterprises; the daily robbing and stripping citizens of their money; sabotaging collective complexes; and setting fire and destroying administrative and economic public enterprises.

These savage actions are being carried out by people who claim to be religious and use religion as a political means. They are being carried out by a small band of perverts and persons who have judicial records, who harbor hatred—the enemies of the homeland—whose hearts are still pained to see Algeria independent, and who act as if they are on enemy soil. They are receiving support from certain countries which are living under oppressive and backward regimes and do not conceal their intention to spread this type of regime to Algeria.

To foil this subversive process, the public authorities carried out a series of actions to protect individuals and property and to put an end to this disease at its roots. The security forces, the state cadres, and the local communities—and here we should not forget to stress their great sacrifices and their devotion, as well as their altruism in serving the country's sublime interests—have implemented practical security measures to protect individuals and their property. These are particularly manifested in the following: undertaking the protection of installations of public economic establishments and public administrative departments; the protection of foreign missions, foreign establishments, and foreign employees who are present on the national soil; the protection of individuals, establishments, and public and private bodies; the consolidation of the local public security; and searching and putting an end to the perpetrators of criminal acts.

The fact that some political forces have not condemned the subversion of the economic, social, and cultural institutions that independent Algeria has achieved at an exorbitant price and through great sacrifices, is regarded as an act of treachery, which the next generation will not forgive.

History will judge all those who kept silent: Their silence is shameful. They kept silent while repugnant crimes were being committed against national assets and innocent citizens, namely state employees, the mojahedin, and the foreigners who came here to participate in the development of Algeria. Irrespective of the political differences between us, the people's gains assume the quality of sacredness and should not be at the center of political dealings and point scoring.

In the light of these events it appears necessary and inevitable that the state should retrieve its self-respect and authority. As a matter of fact we cannot build democracy without a strong state based on stable structures which guarantee the continuity of the state and protect it from politically irresponsible by-ways and deviations.

Proceeding from this [passage indistinct] which adopts scientific and rational methods which works in the interest of the citizens, and undertake their tasks in the best way possible. This is a condition for the continuity of the Algerian state. The planned reform aims at the following: a better balance between objectives; centralization or decentralization; greater protection for officials from oppression; consolidation of oversight by the state to avoid discrepancies in local management with regard to the laws and procedures which are in force by reviving the supervision bodies at all levels; in consultation with local representatives reviewing where necessary the administrative division of the municipalities and districts in an effort to give more effectiveness and a better response to citizens' needs; consolidation of organization and improvement of the financial management of local communities to achieve a better management of financial resources.

The weakening of [words indistinct] of the state, capable of undertaking the major public tasks, and the absence of objective legalized standards and of a just and rational standard concerning the assumption of very senior posts have led to the emergence of nepotism, of favoritism based on region, and especially of building up an entourage, which led to loyalty to the state being replaced by loyalty to men. This led to evident instability in the very senior posts, thus obstructing the continuity of the state and its institutions.

The current reform, which basically depends on restoring self-respect to the administration, aims at creating a total and immediate ban on nepotism, whether based on personal relationship or regionalism, and of the use of entourage.

In conclusion, it should be said that the modern state which we want to build requires efficiency, ethics, and tireless work as we have to raise the challenge anew so that we will not remain isolated from the march of civilized progress. Our country still possesses human and material capabilities which allow it to build a modern and strong state—a law-governed state—which will move the wheel of political development forward and facilitate entry into a real democracy and an economic, social, and cultural development within the framework of a free and organized economy.

It is time for all national forces in the country to unite our efforts to contribute to the work started by the public authorities to put an end to terrorism and establish law and order, and to contribute also in building a strong state guaranteeing success in the march toward political democracy and economic revival which will promote the prosperity of Algeria and make it a country where life is enjoyable—an Algeria whose voice will be heard and respected by other nations.

Through our unity and by placing Algeria above every consideration, we will overcome all obstacles and triumph—God willing—over anyone who diverts us from our path. May God bring us success for the good of our country. Peace and God's mercy and blessing be upon you. [applause]

Economy Minister Gives State of Economy Report

LD2501230594 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1052 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Report on the economy by Economy Minister Mourad Benachnou at the conference on national consensus at the Club des Pins in Algiers—live]

[Excerpts] Mr. Chairman of the Higher State Council; Mr. Chairman of the National Dialogue Commission; Mr. Head of the Government; ladies and gentlemen: The government has carried out, since its formation, an analysis of the financial and economic situation in the country in order to detect the underline factors which would help in slowing, if not stopping, the deterioration. As such, the situation is characterized by the following features:

A spiral inflation which has grown by about 2 percent per month for the widely consumed goods;

A quasi-end to job creation and the loss of job opportunities in all sectors of production as a result of lack of investment and the bad management of the economy. Thus, unemployment, which is rife among youth, was on the increase;

A financial situation was characterized by a deficit in the public sector of the economy, a matter which compelled the treasury to pay off part of this sector's debts;

A sharp deficit in the budget: It was much more than what was estimated at the beginning of the year. It was the result of a drop in the oil revenues, in particular, as a result of a drop in the oil prices in world markets, in addition to a decrease in ordinary tax revenues, given the decline in the production and service sectors of the economy;

A sharp imbalance in the balance of payment which led to restricting imports and controlling through the use of rules and laws scares foreign currency resources. This led to a grave scarcity of the intermediate goods which are destined to the productive apparatus. [passage omitted]

Two-pronged activity was undertaken to re-organize the economy: A corrective activity directed towards the achievement of a balance between the available resources and domestic and foreign expenditures. [passage omitted]

An economic revival activity which was aiming at creating productive working posts and consequently reducing unemployment through investment, the revival of the economic apparatus, regaining the confidence of the private economic operators and the reorganization of the distribution net work.

The success of this revival activity requires a progress in economic reforms and its implementation has to begin, particularly in the fields that include special initiatives and the sectors which have significant repercussion on the economy such as the building sector. Around these two axes, the most important activities of the government in the economic, financial, and monetary spheres were presented in this brief round-up. [passage omitted]

Generally speaking, the in-depth analysis of the government's activities and its intervention should show that the scope of its activities have focussed on reforming and stimulating the economy. Concerning economic reforms, under this title comes the current relations with the IMF aimed at achieving a plan of economic stability, dealing with foreign debts and introducing measures to reduce the budget deficit.

Regarding relations with the IMF, the government decided since its appointment to resume negotiations with the IMF in order to draw a plan for stability. This decision was based on the following estimated factors: The main features of the state of the internal and external finance are an increasing deficit in the budget as a result of the decline in the petroleum revenue and increasing difficulties in securing financial cover for imports through external financing at reasonable cost.

The restoration of internal and external financial equilibriums, I mean a return to an economic policy financed by the existing resources, is the only way to control inflation, boost the economic apparatus, promote private investment, reduce speculative economic activities, and launch actions for the creation of productive and permanent jobs for young people.

Thus, the government is determined to face up to the country's economic and financial situation. There was no suitable remedy [as heard] to improve growth and create jobs. These facts have led to the resumption of talks with the International Monetary Fund. It is worth mentioning in this respect that these talks were never interrupted. The government has given these talks a clear objective and it has drawn up a strategy of negotiations with the IMF taking into account the particular circumstances which the country is going through.

This objective was announced from the very start and the idea is to achieve a program for economic stability. As a result of this strategy these negotiations have moved in a direction which allows our country to benefit from the support and understanding of our international partners with a view to persuading the IMF to take into account our country's special situation and also to pool its own financial resources to help us in our efforts to revive the economy. It is worth noting that the government was anxious not to start negotiations with the IMF before informing its social partners, workers and trade unions. The government thus presented the analysis which led it to choose this path and also the strategies of the negotiations [as heard] which will follow.

The talks with the IMF consisted of three stages. In the first stage, there was a joint analysis of the country's economic and financial situation. This analysis led to in-depth discussions last September in Washington between government representatives and senior officials in the IMF. In the second stage, the two sides agreed to define the economic, financial, and monetary measures which the government would adopt to stabilize the economy. The talks relating to this stage were held in Algeria in the first two weeks of December 1993 between a team of Algerian experts and a team of IMF experts. The objective sought by the two sides was mainly to reach an understanding on elements of the economic policy which should include a structured program in order to improve the country's economic and financial situation.

In the third stage, the two sides agreed to lay down criteria on which these various elements should be based with a view to achieving the desired economic and financial results. They also agreed to discuss these criteria on the strength of technical reports prepared by the two sides.

The elements of the plan of stability which received financial support from the IMF must be tackled during this stage. Intensive work had been undertaken to prepare for these negotiations both at the level of the government and the technical bodies. The technical aspects of relations with the IMF are considered to be under control. They attracted the attention of the directors of the economy concerning the correct Algerian viewpoint with regard to the soundness of its program which will be put before the IMF. These directors have expressed their approval and support after Algeria reached agreement with the IMF. [passage omitted]

The government in its negotiations with the IMF provided for itself a negotiating margin to enable it to stringently and clearly undertake this plan which would have positive effects on social strata. In this framework, one can explain the measures that had been taken recently with the General Union of Algerian Workers [UGTA] within the framework of social protection. [passage omitted]

With regard to the problem of foreign debts, foreign debts at the end 1993 stood at $25.9 billion. It is expected that servicing these debts in 1994 would cost $9.3 billion out of which 7.1 billion dollars are earmarked for the loans and $2.2 billion as interest.

The revenues from exports during the same year could be less than the cost of servicing the debts. As well as being heavy in terms of the economy's ability to sustain servicing them, the main feature of Algeria's foreign debts is that they are of very short terms and they must be settled within a period of three years. The heavy weight of the debts had increased as a result of the drop in the revenues from the exports of carbohydrates coupled with the continuing fall in the price of a barrel of oil and this doubles the efforts to tackle it. The search for a negotiated solution with the creditors to reduce foreign debts must take place through a deal with the IM[000c]. However, this entails results which are known beforehand and effects that can be undertaken. As far as the budget deficit is concerned, the government has paid great importance to reduce the budget deficit which has resulted from a number of economic complications; it is matter which should be taken seriously.

The financial year 1993 was ahead of the forecast; a matter which has enabled the government to take measures to reduce this year's deficit, which is estimated at 12 percent of the GDP. However, as far as 1994 is concerned a number of measures, which would allow a reduction of the deficit to an acceptable level, around 3.6 percent of the GDP, have been taken. Although this should still be considered a high level given the inflationary trends in the economy this figure can, however, be achieved through the following measures:

Cuts in a number of secondary expenditure which would be coupled with further rationalization of other expenditures.

An increase in ordinary tax revenues; which will be achieved only through a program to combat tax evasion. [passage omitted]. The use of some of the money, which has been set aside for the past few years. [passage omitted]

Encouraging investments in the framework of the small and medium-sized companies thanks, in particular, to the law on investments directed mainly at the private sector.

Enforcing the finance law of 1994.

Facilitating the objection of foreign financing.

As far as the law on investments and encouraging small- and medium-sized companies are concerned, and regarding the financial situation of the country, it is difficult to lay down a strict program of economic research. The economy, however, has the potential to have vitality instilled into it, and this potential has not been fully exploited. For this, it needs individual initiative as this is based on restoring confidence in the private sector in particular.

Since it was appointed, the government has adopted a number of measures aimed at not marginalizing the private sector. [passage omitted]

Protecting national production was the subject of measures aimed at raising duties on some products. All import restrictions would be lifted on those products which might compete with national products.

Measures had also been taken to encourage products destined for export by reducing customs duties imposed on raw and semi-manufactured materials used in the manufacturing of products suitable for export.

In the same context, and in order to encourage economic activities by companies whose capital allows for the sharing of risks between numerous investors in a single project, the tax index on the companies' profits had been reduced from 42 percent to 38 percent in the present financial law.

Concerning facilities for acquiring hard currency, in addition to these measures, which are of a legislative nature and which reflect the government's desire to encourage the revival of economic activities, the sum of 60 million American dollars in cash was made to the banks to cover the needs of the private sector for imported materials and spare parts.

Within the same context, the special committee received instructions to grant permits for obtaining foreign financing for the import requests submitted by the private sector to obtain products for the sectors considered of priority, such as the construction sector.

To these measures was added the settlement of the problem of the loss in exchange rate incurred by some private investors as a result of the devaluation of the dinar in 1991.

All these emergency measures would pave the way for the solid revival of the productive activities of the sector of small and medium enterprises.

The adopted economic policy forms a sovereign national choice which is responsible and which was taken after a lot of thinking and adapted to the serious challenges of the current situation. This policy, the essential points of which have already been presented, has been completed and consolidated, particularly with tight and realistic plans, to correct the course of national or local public enterprises whose problems have been identified. These enterprises will have to adapt their methods of management to the new situation which is characterized by special requirements.

In order to allow it to bear fruit, this policy was adopted as a method of work in reorganizing the national financial resources. This policy constitutes a rational choice for a successful move to a market economy since numerous elements of such an economy have already been put in place. This policy requires a continuous effort, discipline and a firmness which does not tolerate shortcomings. In addition to the basic choices which meet the requirements of the present time, the reform and the revival of the economy depend on an collective effort since they will guarantee a return of growth and restore hopes for a regained prosperity to be shared out among everyone. God's peace and mercy be upon you. [applause]

National Dialogue Conference Issues Viewed

'Islamic Tendency' Addressed

LD2501180294 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] The conference's official spokesman stated that 1,235 people participated in the conference. [passage omitted]

The official spokesman Abdelkader Bensalah affirmed further that the disbanded Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] is not present in the conference. However, contacts, which are still continuing, have taken place but they have been very difficult. The first signs are nonetheless encouraging. The following are excerpts from the statement of the official spokesman of the conference:

[Begin Bensalah recording] As far as the Islamic tendency is concerned, I would like to say to you here that such a tendency is not present at the national dialogue conference, contrary to whatever has been said or published. On this occasion, however, it is necessary to inform you that contacts have taken place with this tendency. Such contacts are still continuing but they have been difficult given the particularities of this tendency. However, the first signs of these contacts have been enouraging. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, there is intense activity in the corridors of the Palais des Nations. There are consultations, contacts, rumors, and reports on the personalities who could be appointed for the transition period. Nobody can at this stage confirm or deny these reports. Some parties have even held meetings on the sidelines of the conference. Tension became so acute at times that some participants stayed outside the conference hall.

In a nutshell, this conference is shrouded in suspense as several assumptions are being made. Some say the conference has failed or will fail, while others say this conference is a prelude to a serious dialogue. The rest say that the conference will remain open and that the remaining partners to the dialogue may join.

This evening, the text of the draft proposal on the platform for a consensus on the transition period was handed out to the participants and journalists. The article which was amended a second time and which has attracted everybody's attention is article six of section one on the presidency of the state. This article says: A head of state will be in charge of the presidency of the state. The head of state can appoint one or two deputies. The two deputies will assist the head of state in the tasks assigned to them by him. The head of state will be appointed by the Higher Security Council. This last point is reported to have caused huge disagreements between the participants and the bureau of the conference represented by the National Dialogue Commission.

It is also reported that some parties may withdraw from this conference to protest this amended article six of the draft proposal on the platform. All these reports give an idea of the general atmosphere here at the Palais des Nations and constitute food for discussion for all journalists and political analysts. Thank you. We will be back at 2000 [1900 GMT].

Further on Conference Proceedings

LD2501230094 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Report by unidentified correspondent at National Conference news conference by National Conference spokesman Abdelkader Bensalah]

[Excerpts] [Correspondent] Good evening ladies and gentlemen, 1,235 people participated in the national conference. The official spokesman of the conference has announced that the dissolved Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] is not present in the conference, contrary to the rumor. The conference is setting up its committees. Only two hours ago, HAMAS [Islamic Society Movement], the PRA [Party of Algerian Renewal], and the MDRA [Democratic Movement for the Renewal of Algeria] withdrew from the conference. [passage omitted]

The conference proceedings were opened by Youcef Khatib, chairman of the National Dialogue Commission, with a welcoming speech in which he said:

[Begin Khatib recording] This not the time for one-upmanship or bargaining because the issue concerns first and foremost the fate of Algeria. The present circumstances thus require unity of ranks to confront all the challenges facing the country. Oh brothers and sisters, we do not doubt at all and everybody has got the good intention. However, the required results from all parties have not been realized completely despite the efforts made by the National Dialogue Commission. In my name and on behalf of all the members of the National Dialogue Commission, I thank all the parties which have dealt with us with all seriousness and sincerity." [end recording] [passage omitted]

[Begin recording] [Abdelkader Bensalah, conference spokesman] The idea of the National Dialogue Commission was right from the beginning, to go into the depth of the matter and find out its facts with precision and caution in light of its importance and seriousness. The Commission has always had the conviction that dealing with this matter required time and patience at the same time. The Commission has, through its endeavors toward this Islamic tendency registered tangible results, the most important of which is represented in the latter's acceptance of dialogue as a principle and as a political method to deal with this problem and the need to arrive gradually at its solution. From these premises, the Commission has embodied this option, i.e. that of continuing dialogue when it included it in the platform for national consensus. [end recording]

[Correspondent] The official spokesman concluded his speech by stressing the need to adhere to dialogue as a positive means to ensure its continuation and deepening by the transitional bodies, considering that the dialogue is a pressing need for dealing with all parties. After this, opportunity was given to journalists to ask questions, and the national spokesman declined to answer some of them considering that they were premature. [passage omitted]

HAMAS Withdraws From Conference

LD2501200794 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Excerpts] The event today is the holding of the national consensus conference. In its first day, the proceedings were held this morning in an open session addressed by Higher State Council Ali Kafi, after the conference was opened by Youcef Khatib, chairman of the National Dialogue Commission. This afternoon's proceedings are being held behind closed doors. We will now try to get in touch with our correspondents at the Palais des Nations with the latest developments:

[Correspondent] Yes, Rachid. Ladies and gentlemen, God's peace and mercy be upon you. This afternoon's proceedings come in in two different forms, namely what goes on inside the hall behind closed doors and what goes on behind the scenes, including the unofficial reports which have been circulating about the identity of the next head of state. Things are also happening inside the hall for news conferences where three personalities have turned up so far, and they were the rapporteur of the National Dialogue Commission, the leader of the Party of Algerian Renewal, and the leader of HAMAS (Islamic Society Movement).

The journalists, who have been kept away from the conference hall, have tried to find out whether the report on the appointment of the next head of state is true. According to rumors, the incumbent will be [former foreign minister] Abdelaziz Bouteflika. The report has not been confirmed or denied by official quarters. However, what is certain is that the text of the draft proposal on the platform for national consensus has been amended on the issue of the head of state who will now be appointed by the Higher Security Council. [passage omitted]

The rapporteur of the National Dialogue Commission was very reluctant to reply to some questions particularly those relating to the reported appointment of Abdelaziz Bouteflika. He only said that replying to such a question would be premature.

This afternoon's session was also marked by the news that two other parties, the Party of Algerian Renewal and HAMAS [Islamic Society Movement], have also withdrawn from the conference. Our colleague Mohsin Slimani will clarify the reasons of these withdrawals in the following report:

[Slimani] Indeed. The Party of Algerian Renewal and HAMAS movement, which took part in today's proceedings, have announced their withdrawal from the national conference for different reasons. Nourredine Boukrouh, the leader of the Party of Algerian Renewal, indicated at a news conference that the national conference has lost its credibility in that the participants have found themselves in a position of mere listeners. Boukrouh added that his withdrawal was also due to the fact that the crucial decisions were taken in advance behind the scenes, as he put it. He further said that the head of state was also appointed behind the scenes.

Despite its opposition to the way the conference has been organized, the Party of Algerian Renewal said that it considers itself concerned by the real dialogue which he urged the new head of state to open with representatives of the dissolved Islamic Salvation Front. In the same context, but for different reasons, HAMAS movement leader Mahfouz Nahnah announced the withdrawal of his party from the conference. However, Mahfouz Nahnah said that his movement is committed to a dialogue in which all the active sides will take part. As regards the political forces, the leader of the Islamic Society Movement held the political parties also responsible for the failure of the national conference, which everybody is talking about now. Likewise, Nahnah held the authorities responsible for that too. On the whole, Mahfouz Nahnah regarded the participation of HAMAS as positive since it enabled him to reiterate the principles of his party and it revealed to him the dimensions of the conference or what he described as some actions [as heard]. The national conference, Nahnah said, is devoid of any political aspect as a result of the decision of the major parties to boycott the conference. He added that he has refused to adopt such an attitude saying: We do not want to be the attendants of any political movement. [passage omitted]

Here follows an excerpt from the statement made by Mahfouz Nahnah, leader of HAMAS movement:

[Begin Nahnah recording] We hoped, from the beginning, that the dialogue would be national, as I said, and political and not based on groups and associations. The conference could well benefit from these groups and these associations, but we believe that these cannot be the core of the dialogue in the absence of the partners to the dialogue. We also believe that this operation is unlikely to achieve the minimum that would maintain the value of this dialogue. However, we strongly believe that this national conference—supposedly national and supposedly political—has now whetted the appetite of those who wanted to join a wider dialogue in the future so as to sow hope, spread compassion, reassure the masses yearning for security and stability, and put Algeria in its rightful place among the peoples and the nations. For the aforementioned reasons, we announce, on behalf of the HAMAS delegation and after taking part for a whole day, our withdrawal from the proceedings of this conference, and not our withdrawal from an open, broad, comprehensive and in-depth dialogue. [end recording]

[Slimani] In the same context, we will now listen to the statement made by Noureddine Boukrouh, leader of the Party of Algerian Renewal:

[Begin Boukrouh recording] We are not concerned by the results of this conference, we will not get involved in the work of the committees which have been set up, and we are withdrawing from the conference this evening. We did not want to do it in a sensational way and surprise people. We decided against that and we gave our analysis not in a sensational way because *we are people keen on analysis and we are coherent* [italicized words in French]. We tried to do it in the best possible way. [end recording]

Islamic Arab Rally Suspends Participation

LD2501234194 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2300 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Correspondent] The rapporteur of the National Dialogue Commission [Abdelkader Bensalah, official spokesman of the national conference] confirmed that the dialogue is continuing and that the conference is not the end of it.

[Begin Bensalah recording] This conference is not an end itself but is a means in the framework of the dialogue which will continue even after the convening of this conference. [passage omitted] [end recording]

[Correspondent] But other information has appeared following the statement of the commission's spokesman. These carried other signs which could be promising. Shaban Lunak.

[Lunak] We were not mistaken in our previous reports, but we, like other men of information at the Palace des Nations, followed the first hours of the proceedings of the national consensus conference. We are still under the spell of the surprise which could happen. All readings and analyses have moved from the limits of possible optimism to the thunderbolt of eminent failure. [as heard] [passage omitted]

After what has been said about this issue, we can say today that the contacts which took place between the constituents of the dissolved Islamic Salvation Front and the National Dialogue Commission took place without any mediators, parties or independent figures, as was rumored. [passage omitted]

[Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic at 2300 GMT on 24 January, in another report on the conference, adds: "We have learned that the Islamic Arab Rally has decided to suspend its participation in the national conference."]

National Constitutional Rally Withdraws

LD2501171094 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Our correspondent has informed us that the National Constitutional Rally, which is a coalition of 11 parties, has decided to withdraw from the conference after it became clear that parties which have a say in the procedures were absent. It is also expected that two committees will be set up, one in charge of the national consensus platform and the other one in charge of the institutions of the transitional period.

Socialist Forces Front Official Comments

LD2501222294 Paris France-2 Television Network in French 1900 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Interview with Hocine Ait Ahmed, secretary general of the Socialist Forces Front, by unidentified correspondent in Paris—live or recorded]

[Excerpts] [Correspondent] Civil peace is still a dream in Algeria. The national conference which opened in Algiers today is national in name only. The major parties are boycotting it. Our guest, Hocine Ait Ahmed will tell us why. [passage omitted]

Hocine Ait Ahmed, you are in Paris, and not in Algiers. Why are you boycotting the conference? I recall that you are the secretary general of the Socialist Forces Front.

[Ait Ahmed] Listen, we started to take part in the dialogue aimed at organizing this conference. It appeared that there was no dialogue, neither on the form nor on the substance; it was a monologue. Those who were in charge of conducting this dialogue did not want to make concessions. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Why don't you take the opportunity of this conference to say it openly and publicly in front of all the media?

[Ait Ahmed] We said a long time ago that missing the opportunity offered by this conference was an enormous political mistake. It was we, if you remember, who called for a national conference two years ago. The way we perceived the conference was that it should be composed of the army, which is the real power with the power of decision, and the representative parties. It was up to the conference to establish the new structure and the presidential body. As soon as we were certain that all the transition structures and the form that the presidency would take were already decided upon behind the scenes, and that we would be there for the sole purpose of being a rubber stamp...

[Announcer, interrupting] What you say means that dialogue is impossible. So does this mean that you are giving a free hand to extremists of all kinds?

[Ait Ahmed] Listen, the jokes...[pauses] It is the regime that is giving ammunition to the extremists. They have showed the most stunning disdain of the people in staging a farce in the name of a national conference.

[Correspondent] Is Algeria in a civil war?

[Ait Ahmed] Algeria is not in a civil war but it is running the risk of getting there. It is not in a civil war because the Algerian people do not wish to embark on such a path. One side of the Algerian population is not taking arms against another, whatever the effort of the regime to involve the population.

[Correspondent] Still, could it happen?

[Ait Ahmed] Well, all the ingredients are there, above all the high cost of living and a social situation whose extent one cannot imagine.

[Correspondent] You are asking for democratic elections.

[Ait Ahmed] Yes.

[Correspondent] What if these democratic elections result in favor of the enemies of democracy, that is, the fundamentalist militants?

[Ait Ahmed] The whole problem lies there. This is the pretext the regime used to justify the coup d'etat, to say there will not be civilian peace without us. Well, not only have they failed to establish civil peace but they also indefinitely postponed the return to the democratic process. Now it is clear that after a two-year transition resulting from the democratic process, they want to extend it to another three-year transition. This is proof that they do not want any democracy; therefore the country is running a higher risk of total collapse.

[Correspondent] What do you expect from France and Europe?

[Ait Ahmed] Listen, we expect Europe to apply the law. The principle of respect for human rights and the democratic principles are for everyone. We have seen big movements of solidarity with the people of eastern Europe in the West. As far as Algeria is concerned, it is as if its people do not deserve any attention. It is true that the Algerian problem should be solved by the Algerians, by all sides. We notice that the regime has not ceased asking for financial and economic aid. It cannot ask for favorable treatment for itself and at the same time for a discriminatory one for the people. Human rights and democracy should triumph in the country.

[Correspondent] In one word, Mr. Ait Ahmed: Are you pessimistic?

[Ait Ahmed] I am pessimistic if the international community continues to be fooled by the regime. But I am completely optimistic if the means to establish democracy are given to us. There are democratic forces in Algerian society. All they need is the means to express and freely organize themselves. I am ready to commit myself.

[Correspondent] Thank you Mr. Ait Ahmed for the interview.

Military Accepts Bouteflika 'Conditions'

PM2501140694 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 24 Jan 94 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "On Eve of Dialogue Conference in Algeria: Bouteflika 'Only Candidate' for Presidency?"]

[Excerpts] Algiers, AL-HAYAH—Competent organs in Algeria are working to open the national dialogue conference tomorrow, Tuesday [25 Jan], despite the decision by the National Liberation Front [FLN], the Socialist Forces Front, the Islamic Salvation Front, and a number of small parties not to take part in it. [passage omitted]

Political and media circles in Algeria are asking on the eve of the national conference about the "new successor" of 'Ali Kafi, chairman of the Higher State Council [HCE], whose term terminates on 31 January.

Abdelaziz Bouteflika (foreign minister in the days of the late President Houari Boumedienne and member of the FLN Central Committee) is still the name mentioned in official state circles in Algeria, especially after his meeting with the military establishment and his "temporary" nomination to lead the transitional phase.

A reliable source has told AL-HAYAH that the military establishment has accepted the conditions set by Bouteflika. They are:

1. To appoint him by the military establishment as president, and that his appointment should not be based on a proposal from the national conference scheduled to be held tomorrow.

2. To grant him all the powers granted to the president of the republic in accordance with the present Constitution. He does not accept the formula for collective power sharing represented in the five-member Higher State Council or the one proposed in the "document on the dialogue terms," which stipulated the existence of one or two vice presidents.

3. To work in accordance with the present Constitution, which should not be amended. And the "document on dialogue terms" should not be adopted as a new constitution.

4. To grant him full powers to appoint or dismiss the prime minister.

5. Not to impose on him the formula proposed in the "document on dialogue terms" with regard to the transitional national assembly appointed by the parties, organizations, and associations participating in the national conference. [passage omitted]

Bouteflika Turns Down Offer of Presidency

NC2601111594 Paris AFP in English 1056 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Algiers, Jan 26 (AFP)—Algerian former foreign minister Abdelaziz Bouteflika has turned down a proposal to become the country's president for a three-year transitional period, an official spokesman said Wednesday [26 Jan].

Bouteflika, 59, who served under the 1965-78 presidency of Houari Boumediene, had been mooted as the man most likely to take up the post, with the approval of the armed forces.

Abdelkadar Bensalah, spokesman for a national conference organised by the government but boycotted by all the main political parties, announced that the gathering, meeting for the second and final day, "has been informed of this refusal."

Boutaflika Reconsiders Position

LD2601114694 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] The conference of national consensus resumed today at the Palais des Nations. Here is our correspondent to give you the latest:

[Unidentified correspondent] Good morning, listeners everywhere. The news from the conference of national consensus is that Abdelkader Bensalah, the official conference spokesman, held a news conference about 20 minutes ago. The main points at the news conference were, first, Mr. Bensalah's announcement that no final decision has been made with regard to the presidential body which will succeed the Higher State Council. Irrespective of everything the issue will be decided by the Higher Security Council before 31 January. Also, Mr. Bensalah stated that Youcef Khatib, chairman of the National Dialogue Commission and chairman of the conference, informed the conference participants that Abdelaziz Boutaflika, whose name has been mentioned a great deal in recent days in connection with the post of head of state and who has expressed his acceptance in principles, has reconsidered his position. This is the news from this morning's session, which continued behind closed doors.

Egypt

President Mubarak Delivers Police Day Speech

NC2501130894 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0923 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Speech by President Husni Mubarak marking Egyptian Police Day at the Police Academy in Cairo—live]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Dear brothers and sons, soldiers, and officers of the police:

It was not strange for the Egyptian police to choose one of the greatest days of national struggle to mark its day and for us to remember the sacrifices of honorable men who gave their lives in the line of duty. They defended their position to the last man to make this day a national holiday for all Egypt, a day that elevates the value of duty, shows the meaning of sacrifice, and emphasizes the determination of a people to stand fast.

The steadfastness of a limited number of policemen in Ismailia on 25 January 1952 against the foreign occupation forces and their courageous resistance of the aggression until the end was a glorious chapter in the epic of our national struggle. They stood fast in the face of military forces equipped with all types of heavy weapons. They chose to die defending their small post to show the steadfastness of all Egypt in the face of the occupation's arrogance and violence. They were a splendid symbol of the steadfastness of a nation that rejects submission and surrender. They were an eternal example of a splendid national courage that rejects coercion and violence. They were a true embodiment of a great Egyptian call to defend the dignity and honor of the homeland.

The Egyptian police chose this great day in the history of Egyptian patriotism to emphasize the meaning of devotion and sacrifice and to emphasize the commitment of this longtime national institution to the objectives of national struggle. Policemen are a part of the fiber of this people. Their duty is to defend the people's hopes and aspirations; guard the security of every citizen; protect citizens' honor, freedom, and property; safeguard the country's stability; maintain respect for the law; restrain the oppressor; assist the needy; defend society against the evils of outlaws; and fight illegal profiteers, drug traffickers, mishandlers of the people's interests, and those who dare to tamper with the country's security and stability.

This sublime and noble message is not easy to carry out. Only those who are able to give of themselves and sacrifice can shoulder its burdens and difficulties, those who are ready to sacrifice for the sake of the country, those who do not hesitate to confront the most difficult dangers to defend the security of every citizen, and those who compete to sacrifice their lives to fulfill their duty.

The sacrifices of Egyptian policemen, represented by the events of January 1995, are continuing every day in numerous forms of heroism and sacrifice while defending the people's right to a secure and stable country, which should be not affected by the designs of a deviated and blinded group. This group has launched a war against its country, destroying its economy, undermining its interests, and killing and wounding many innocent victims without any restraint from religion or conscience.

Righteous police officers and soldiers have been martyred. They have offered their blood to defend the right of every Egyptian to a safe homeland that protects his present and future. Some of them were martyred in confrontations sparked by the growing criminal inclinations of those groups. Others were treacherously martyred, fired at while going about their daily business only because of their affiliation with a national agency whose primary responsibility is to maintain the homeland's security and stability.

Brothers and sons, police officers, and soldiers: I am fully confident that all of Egypt is joining us today as we celebrate a national day associated, in history and meaning, with the sacrifices of honorable men who were, and still are, pioneers in confrontation and sacrifice. They are doing all they can to confront an imminent danger that is laying in wait for the future of the homeland, a danger linked to the conspiracies of known foreign forces that do not want Egypt to have stability or progress, forces that use local individuals and groups whose conscience is blind to the interests of the homeland.

Society has discovered the truth of the police prediction made long ago that those groups seek to impoverish Egypt and hinder its progress in favor of foreign forces that want our country to remain burdened with the problems of unemployment, poverty, and a lack of job and investment opportunities so that it will not contribute to human progress.

First and foremost, those groups are a tool of sabotage and destruction. Their other role is to block Egypt's democratic march and undermine the achievements of successive Egyptian generations that have struggled throughout history to turn this homeland into a beacon of faith and a torch of science and culture. Their aim is to frighten and force darkness onto the mind of the nation and turn the homeland into a large prison, where there is no place for opposition or debate and no room for divergent views or opinions except under guillotines.

The objectives of those groups have been revealed. They rid themselves of any deterrent from religion or conscience and continue with their growing criminal inclination, committing extremely shameful and horrible acts. Their true face has been flagrantly exposed to all: They are merely hired gangs shedding the blood of innocent people and violating the interests of the majority of our silent people. They kill for the sake of killing, unconcerned with the fall of scores of innocent victims.

Police officers have never hesitated to confront the groups of terrorists. They have waged the confrontation battle boldly and courageously, enjoying the support of a great nation that has realized the dimensions and dangers of the conspiracy. The people have strongly supported their police officers, protecting their backs, blessing their efforts, and helping them as much as they could.

The people have helped chase the culprits and have led police to the dens of saboteurs. At the decisive moments, the people have closed their ranks in calling for uprooting terrorists, who seek to impoverish Egypt, destroy its national economy, and disrupt its security for external goals and do not care about the interests of the homeland or the people. The masses have closed their ranks while paying tribute to victims from the police and the people, openly announcing their decision to confront terrorism, the enemy of God and the homeland, while condemning its abominable crimes and raising their voices against its atrocities, which run contrary to heavenly messages and human values, target innocent victims, and waste the homeland's present and future.

This increasing cohesion between the people and the police in the face of terrorist groups shows whoever has vision and insight that terrorism has no future on this good and tolerant soil, that it is inevitably doomed to fail and recede, and that it will remain isolated and besieged until it is uprooted. Terrorism has no future on this ancient land because its abominable deeds and crimes are carried out by aberrant groups that have broken away from the national unanimity. They are at odds with the spirit of the people, run contrary to the people's nature, and undermine their interests. A minority who is isolated from the national mainstream will not be able to humiliate the will of the people or dictate to this noble nation a fate that has nothing to offer but ignorance, despotism, oppression, and poverty.

Brothers and sons: The Egyptian people's decision to side with their police marks a decisive development in the confrontation with the phenomenon of terrorism because the security of any homeland cannot be fully and properly attained without cooperation between the people and the police in combating crime, exposing corruption, and uncovering criminals. The awareness of each citizen of his responsibility for the security of the country and his realization of the importance of assisting police officers in their mission will ensure stability in every part of the country, broaden the respect for the law, and keep crime to a minimum. No matter how capable the state may be in intensifying security measures on Egyptian streets, it has limits that are difficult to go beyond. Police cannot put a security guard in every part of the country, but each citizen could contribute toward maintaining the security of the neighborhood he lives in. By doing this we could contain terrorism in limited areas that are easy to narrow down. Cooperation between the police and people is important because of several other factors. The most important factor is that it is the duty of the police to provide security for each Egyptian and that police officers are part of the people and are doing their duty toward their families.

We all must remember that security is not just the responsibility of the regime or of those in charge of it. It is also the responsibility of each citizen to help protect his livelihood, honor, children, life, and property. It is the responsibility of society now and in the future.

Brothers and sisters. The arm of the state is strong and capable of uprooting the terrorist elements in the quickest time possible. But we do not want to invalidate the rule of the law and we refuse to bypass our national commitment to let our ways and means of combating terrorism remain confined to the framework that protects our democratic choice.

Police behavior toward the enemies of the homeland will remain civilized and governed by the rule of law and will remain above the methods of revenge. The police will not punish anyone for a crime committed by someone else but will put the whole matter into the hands of a fair and honest judiciary that is not subject to any authority other than conscience and the law.

The recent terrorist incidents that aimed to frighten society and to destroy the homeland's structures could have been the excuse for stringent emergency measures that strengthen the police force's ability to confront the terrorist elements and cut short the time needed for the confrontation. But we refused to do this out of respect for the rule of law, the authority of the judiciary, and human rights. We refused to do so out of belief in the ability of the democratic course to confront terrorism if all the efforts of society combine to confront this phenomenon and the political responsibility of the parties and the national action institutions rise to the level of commitment to the homeland's supreme interests. This great cooperation between the police and the people is now available.

The fact is that some of our national parties have taken a step in the right direction. They condemn terrorism and strongly call for eliminating its lairs, causes, and roots. Only some of the enemies of democracy, who still hide behind false slogans that propagate terrorist ideas and actions, have remained outside this national consensus.

Brothers, before the referendum on the new term of office, I called for a statewide national dialogue in which all national parties and forces take part in order to define clearly the priorities of national action in light of the circumstances and the challenges that the homeland is going through. My objective from this dialogue—and it is still my objective—is to reach a national agreement that will position the issue of security and stability correctly among the national action priorities because society will not have the opportunity to advance along the course of economic or social reform in the absence of stability. Stability is the basis and the support for a democratic and capable homeland that is not distracted from continuing its progress by ambition, the chaos of conflicts, or the struggle between forces.

In my comprehensive speech at the recent opening of the People's Assembly's parliamentary session following the referendum, I urged that the objectives of the national dialogue should extend to include a scientific, objective, and comprehensive concept of Egypt's future at the start of the 21st century. My aim has been and still is that this comprehensive concept should lead to a widely based national accord committed to the homeland's supreme interests and rallies the efforts of all forces behind the homeland's strategic objectives about which there can be no argument. The political parties, national forces, public action establishments, intellectuals, and those who care about the homeland's future responded positively to the call for a national dialogue. I believe that this dialogue could be a good opportunity to achieve a comprehensive vision that goes beyond our narrow party interests, places our national priorities in their right place, and draws the dividing lines that no one should go beyond for the sake of protecting this homeland's interests.

We are not trying to remove the differences among the various parties, nor do we want to abolish points of divergence in their views and programs. It is in divergent programs and views that the meaning of democracy lies. In essence, democracy is a dialogue between opposing views to attain the truth or agree on common objectives.

From this national dialogue, we do not seek to abolish differences in views, but we call for respecting the priorities and principles of the democratic action, which suppose a minimum level of agreement among the various parties on the homeland's high interests when it faces one of its main challenges.

Brothers and sons, police officers and soldiers: We are not the only ones suffering from terrorism. In many countries, there are terrorist groups led by disobedient ones, mutineers, and outlaws. Despair eroded their souls, and frozen minds prevented them from keeping up with the developments of the age. They were turned into a destructive force against their homelands. They wanted to obstruct society, antagonize history, and move backward to escape the burdens of the future.

But these groups soon disappear without achieving anything. They are scattered remnants that do not represent a basic trend in society. Perhaps the difference between one particular situation and another lies in the ability of each society to prepare itself to confront the phenomenon through firm, unwavering national unanimity—one that does not tolerate ambiguity or compromise, and is not spoiled by a sinful desire to use the situation to achieve small party interests, often at the expense of the society.

I do not need to stress the importance of our national consensus on the issue of stability. The message of security and stability is never separable from the message of economic and political construction. Without stability, it is impossible for democracy or the economy to flourish, and it is impossible for us to aspire to a strong state capable of meeting its people's demands.

This is the fact that we must keep before our eyes; it is a fact that cannot tolerate denial or one-upmanship. I am confident that the wave of terrorism will recede and vanish in the face of our national consensus and the determination of the great Egyptian people to eradicate this phenomenon. Then, Egypt will continue the march of construction and development, more strongly and vigorously, under a safe and stable umbrella where investment capabilities are redoubled, the tourism boom is restored, new projects are spread over every inch of this homeland, and all efforts are devoted to a fair and continuing development that takes into consideration Egypt's less-developed geographic regions and the slums most in need of services.

The wave of terrorism will be broken and will disappear through the sacrifices of the heroic men who offered their dear souls so that this homeland will remain, as it has always been, safe and stable, built by the hands of its virtuous sons—hands that do not know destruction, only construction. The country will continue its message as a beacon of light and culture, with a history that has produced a succession of intellectuals, thinkers, creative people, and esteemed ulema and judges. They have been the conscience of this nation, spreading the values of justice, enlightenment, and support for life.

The sacrifices of these martyrs will remain a beacon exuding the values of sacrifice and loyalty, embodying the offerings of brave men who defended the people's right to live, and immortalizing the loyalty of a great people who will continue to remember with gratitude their heroic and innocent sons. Greetings to the policemen who continue to offer sacrifices in defense of the security of every citizen. Greetings to their innocent martyrs who offered their souls to redeem a homeland aspiring to security, stability, and progress. Greetings to other martyr citizens who treacherously fell victim to abominable crimes, including innocent children in the age of flowers, youths who were sources of hope for their relatives and homeland, and ordinary innocent Egyptians.

Brothers, the forces of treachery and darkness cannot undermine this high edifice built by the Egyptian people with their sweat, sacrifice, and struggle. The Egyptians have realized great construction and progress, which will not be obstructed by terrorist crimes that the whole people have denounced when they discovered they are seeking to ruin this edifice and squander the homeland's interests. We have agreed on building a free and democratic society that respects the right to disagreement within the framework of a real multi-party system and that gives full opportunity for opinion and counter-opinion. The achievement of this goal has not been easy under the difficult circumstances that could have eroded our nascent democracy. However, we have stood fast and fought. We now have a correct democracy, the course of which is being strengthened day by day. This democracy is based on a multi-party system, a free press, and an independent judiciary. We have agreed on establishing a society capable of fulfilling the people's demands and harnessing their resources. This society is pervaded by mutual confidence and does not deny the opportunity for participation to any citizen. The achievement of this goal has not been easy in a society governed by vestiges and shackles trying to pull it backward and squander its strength.

We now have a society capable of shouldering the burdens of the future, a society that opens the doors of participation for whoever wants to enter, and that accepts any contribution that increases its strength and potential. We have agreed to build a society not governed by the complexes of the past. This society looks forward to the future, upholds a just peace, seeks to reclaim its pioneer position in the world, and extends bridges of cooperation to all. The achievement of this goal has not been easy in an Arab and international climate permeated by apprehensions and doubts. We now have an open society that has relations with all states and that plays its vanguard role in the Arab world as a force for justice and solidarity. It spreads the umbrella of peace over the whole region. It lifts Egypt's banners high.

We have agreed to build a strong state having a national deterrent force, thus preserving the homeland's destiny and protecting its peace and security. Achieving this goal has not been easy in difficult economic conditions. We now have armed forces capable of undertaking their national tasks, defending peace and participating with rare efficiency in preserving national security and world peace.

Officers and men, let us be confident that falsehood will retreat because truth is bound to triumph and falsehood cannot survive in a country full of light, riches, and faith that labors for a better future for its future generations. Falsehood will not stand a chance of surviving in this good and tolerant land. It will remain outcast and isolated and pursued by the people's anger and wrath until it recedes and disappears.

The wave of terrorism will retreat and break by virtue of the valiant men's courage and the awareness of a nation that cannot be deceived by falseness and perversion so that Egypt will become again, as it always has, a safe and secure country. This is Almighty God's promise. Peace and God's mercy be upon you. [applause]

'Arafat Arrives in Cairo on Third Visit in Week

NC2501143594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1257 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 25 Jan (MENA)—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and his accompanying delegation arrived in Cairo this afternoon. This is his third visit to Egypt within a week.

In an arrival statement, 'Arafat described his meeting in Riyadh yesterday with King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, as "important, positive, and wide-ranging."

'Arafat said he thanked King Fahd for the support given by Saudi Arabia to the Palestinian people and their cause on various regional, Arab, and international forums. 'Arafat praised the principled and unshifting position of King Fahd and Saudi Arabia concerning the issue of Jerusalem, the capital of Palestine.

Economic Cooperation Accord Signed

NC2501163994 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat met Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa over a luncheon banquet at the Foreign Ministry today. Members of the Palestinian delegation accompanying 'Arafat, who arrived today in Cairo from Saudi Arabia, also attended.

Egypt and the PLO today signed an agreement for economic cooperation. Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and Faruq Qaddumi, the head of the PLO's Political Department, signed the agreement.

The agreement involves measures to encourage the exchange of national products, calls for settling transactions in convertible currencies, calls for preferential treatment for national products from both sides, and urges mutual incentives for investment and capital movement.

The two sides agreed to form a joint committee for technical and economic cooperation cochaired by the foreign ministers of both countries [fi al-baladayn].

'Arafat, Musa Meet

NC2501191294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1640 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 25 Jan (MENA)—Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat has praised President Husni Mubarak's efforts to surmount the obstacles to the prompt, sure implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles.

Following a two-hour meeting with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa today, 'Arafat said that the latest Egyptian effort in this regard was Musa's visit to Israel, where he discussed the outcome of the meeting in Oslo between 'Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres.

'Arafat said President Mubarak and his foreign minister deserve credit and gratitude for their efforts, which have boosted the Palestinian cause.

We expect and hope to overcome the obstacles still facing the Declaration of Principles within the next few days, 'Arafat said. He added that important talks will be held tonight between Israeli officials who will arrive in Cairo tonight and the Palestinian delegation. The talks will continue tomorrow and may go into Thursday and Friday if needed.

'Arafat pointed out that Musa returned from Israel with important results. The Palestinian president said the Israeli delegation that will arrive tonight is the same delegation that accompanied Peres to the Oslo talks last week. 'Arafat said the Palestinian delegation is eager to see what the Israelis will bring to the Cairo talks.

On his visit to Saudi Arabia, 'Arafat said he was pleased with it and with the meeting he held with Saudi King Fahd, custodian of the two holy mosques. He described his talks with King Fahd as good, constructive, and positive. He said he explained everything that has been achieved in the peace talks and thanked the king for his efforts to stimulate the peace process.

The Palestinian president said he asked King Fahd to continue exerting efforts on the international, Arab, and regional levels on behalf of the Palestinian people, their cause, and the sacred cause of Jerusalem.

Musa said 'Arafat talked with President Mubarak on the telephone. And Mubarak was in constant touch with us during the talks we held tonight, he remarked.

The Egyptian foreign minister said the arrival of the Israeli delegation in Cairo tonight for talks with the

Palestinian delegation to explore ways to overcome the remaining problems is a new and satisfactory development.

He revealed that he will meet 'Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Peres in Davos, Switzerland. Musa added that efforts to settle the remaining problems will continue in the next few days.

PLO's Qaddumi Leaves for Geneva

NC2601084494 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0740 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 26 Jan (MENA)—PLO Political Department Chief Faruq Qaddumi left Cairo for Geneva this morning after a two-day visit to Egypt, during which he signed an agreement for economic cooperation between Egypt and the PLO. It is worth noting that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres will meet in Davos, Switzerland, on Saturday.

Mubarak, Fahd Exchange Views on Mideast Peace

NC2501195194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1925 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 25 Jan (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak this evening received a telephone call from King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the custodian of the two holy mosques.

The two leaders exchanged views on various issues and on the ongoing contacts among the parties to the Middle East peace process.

Israelis Arrive in Cairo for Talks With Palestinians

NC2501193594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1830 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 25 Jan (MENA)—A six-man Israeli delegation led by Foreign Ministry Director General Uri Savir arrived in Cairo this evening. The delegation, which accompanied Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres during his stay in Oslo last week, will open talks with the Palestinian side later tonight. The delegation may stay in Cairo until Friday.

Norwegian Foreign Ministry Team Arrives

NC2601125194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0842 GMT 26 jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 26 Jan (MENA)—A Norwegian Foreign Ministry delegation led by (Per Haugestad), official in charge of the Middle East desk at the Norwegian Foreign Ministry, arrived in Cairo this morning on a two-day visit to Egypt. The head of the delegation stated that the goal of the visit is to play a role in reconciling the Palestinian and Israeli sides in the peace negotiations and overcoming the obstacles impeding implementation of the Gaza-Jericho Declaration of Principles.

Paper Details Hamas Support to 'Terrorists'

NC2501175894 Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I in Arabic 20 Jan 94 p 1

[Report by Muhammad 'Abd-al-Bari]

[Text] Investigations by the security organs have revealed that Samir Isma'il Salih, a Palestinian student attending al-Azhar Institute in al-Zaytun, had strong links with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. "Coded" messages issued by the Hamas leadership in the occupied territories were found in Salih's possession. The messages contain instructions from Hamas for suicide operations to be waged against policemen in retaliation for what the group called repressive measures against brothers in jihad in Egypt.

A responsible security source told AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I's legal editor that preliminary information indicates a foreign security service has infiltrated Hamas and is steering it toward supporting to terrorists locked in armed confrontation with the Egyptian security organs, in an effort to destabilize Egypt.

The security source said that Hamas, while involved in supporting Egyptian terrorists, remains unaware of being infiltrated by the foreign security service.

The source disclosed that the raid on a terrorist stronghold in al-Ma'sarah [a southern suburb of Cairo] came after investigations showed that a number of individuals living in that area had been involved in attacks against policemen.

One notorious terrorist, Tharwat Hajjaj, however, managed to escape the police dragnet, together with his wife and three children. Two others, Muhammad Ahmad Farhan and Samir Salih, were captured.

The source added that the Egyptian security service had information showing Hamas' support of terrorists but lacked material evidence. The arrest of the Palestinian student provided us with that evidence, he stated.

[Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic on pp 1, 4 of its 22 January issue says: "A high-ranking security source has denied a press report on the involvement of a certain Palestinian organization in terrorist acts in Egypt. The source said that terrorist Samir Salih has been living in Cairo for some time and that terrorists succeeded in recruiting him."]

Editorial: Iraq's Disarmament Linked With Peace

NC2501155094 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0602 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 25 Jan (MENA)—AL-AHRAM writes that the United Nations' efforts to disarm Iraq, which are part of the preparations to implement long-term monitoring of Iraq's armament, again raise the issue of controlling nuclear, conventional, and nonconventional armaments in the Middle East.

The paper recalls the Security Council resolutions that said disarming Iraq should be part of a process to rid the Middle East of all weapons of mass destruction and to establish a new security order in the region.

While acknowledging that the effort to control armaments in the region is primarily linked with an Arab-Israeli settlement, the paper, in its editorial today, adds that the part of these resolutions that has been implemented involves Iraq alone.

AL-AHRAM stresses that the Iraqi threat, which some parties used as an excuse in the past, no longer exists. It adds: Further, achieving progress in the efforts to control armaments will necessarily create a better climate for boosting the overall settlement process.

Libya

General People's Congress Continues Work in Surt

LD2501201894 Tripoli JANA in English 1800 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Surt, Ay Annar [January] 25, JAMAHIRIYA NEWS AGENCY—The general forum of peoples congresses, peoples committees, trades unions, and vocational associations - the General Peoples Congress - resumed their session this morning in the al-Wafa' Hall in Surt in order to deliberate the decisions adopted by the basic peoples congresses at their second ordinary session for the year 1403.

Sudan

Government Claims Control of Eastern Equatoria

EA2501193794 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1530 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Juba, 25 Jan (SUNA)—Brigadier Zakariyya Adam Ahmad, commander of Kapoeta garrison, has confirmed in a statement to SUNA the stability of the security situation in the eastern area of Equatoria State and that the Armed Forces are imposing their control on the area in complete cooperation with the citizens of Kapoeta who have given practical evidence of their full loyalty to the homeland and their discarding of the rebellion in its various factions.

In the same context, Mr. (Jack Peter), deputy governor of Equatoria State, has commended the heroic role of the sons of Kapoeta in confronting the rebellion and in supporting the Armed Forces' efforts to achieve peace and stability in the province. His Excellency confirmed in a mass rally during his visit to the province recently that the freedom of religion in Sudan was guaranteed. He explained that the revolution is working for the sake of entrenching (?all) walks of life and reviving eminent humanitarian values which were proclaimed by the revealed religions. [as received]

GCC's al-Qasimi on Boycott, Gulf Issues, Oil Output

NC2501202394 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1750 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 25 Jan (MENA)—Shaykh Fahim Bin-Sultan al- Qasimi, secretary general of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC], has affirmed that the Arab boycott of Israel will continue until the original causes for it have been removed and Israel has withdrawn from all the occupied Arab territories. He noted that the bilateral boycott [muqata'ah thuna'iyah] can be ended gradually if progress is made on the basis of goodwill initiatives.

At a press conference he held this afternoon on the sidelines of the second international conference on challenges facing the Arab world amid world changes, Shaykh al-Qasimi said that there is no fear of Israeli penetration of Gulf markets if a comprehensive peace is achieved. He remarked that the GCC states will not be a "piece of cake" for Israel.

On the GCC stand on Iran's occupation of Tunb al-Sughra, Tunb al- Kubra, and Abu-Musa—the three islands of the United Arab Emirates—al-Qasimi pointed out that the GCC will refer the matter to international organizations if Iran and the Emirates do not resolve the dispute.

Asked about the varying stands the GCC states adopted on Iraq and Iran, al-Qasimi emphasized that the GCC summit resolutions on these matters are binding to all members. He pointed out that varying views do not mean that these states are divided. Each state is entitled to its own views and what counts is for all these views to serve the GCC's interests, he said. He added that any contact between a Gulf state and either Iran or Iraq is in the GCC states' interest because these contacts seek solutions to the problems involving these two states.

On the GCC stance on borders among Gulf states, Shaykh Fahim remarked that the GCC is not a unique case and that these matters are on their way to a solution.

Answering a question on increasing the number of the Peninsula Shield troops, al-Qasimi stated that the GCC has agreed to increase the troops from 8,000 to 17,000 and to develop united military and communication systems.

Shaykh al-Qasimi added that the Gulf states must develop a common vision of cooperation. He also said that the Damascus Declaration leaves defense cooperation between Gulf states and both Egypt and Syria up to each individual state.

Al-Qasimi answered a question on the visit the Omani energy minister paid to European and East Asian states to negotiate a reduction in oil output. He said the visit produced encouraging results and that he received a report from the Omani minister, affirming that the responses were very reassuring. He remarked that a reasonable reduction in the oil output will contribute to price stability.

Kuwait

Amir Holds Talks With Visiting Maldives President

LD2501145194 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1000 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Maldives President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom visited his highness the amir at 1000 hours this morning at the Bayan Palace, where the official talks between them were held.

Shaykh Jabir Mubarak al-Hamad al-Sabah, adviser at the amir's office, said that the talks focused on developments in relations between the two friendly countries and issues of mutual interest. The talks were held in a cordial atmosphere, characterized by mutual understanding and a spirit of friendship.

Maldives President Departs

LD2601115594 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0922 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Kuwait, 26 Jan (KUNA)—Maldives President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom left Kuwait today at the end of a three-day official visit. He was seen off by Kuwaiti Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al- Jabir al-Sabah; Prime Minister Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al- Sabah, the heir apparent; and a number of senior Kuwaiti officials. During his visit President Abdul Gayoom conducted talks with the amir and senior officials which centered on the latest developments in bilateral relations and issues of common interest.

Paper Assails 'Arafat's 'Sins' During Gulf War

LD2601095594 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0800 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Kuwait, 26 Jan (KUNA)—A Kuwaiti daily asked today how Yasir 'Arafat could forget the sins he committed against our kith and kin in Saudi Arabia when al-Dammam, Dahra, and Riyadh were being hit by the missiles of Iraqi sin while he placed his hand into the hand of his friend Saddam Husayn, and was the first person to believe that the path leading to the liberation of Jerusalem passes through Kuwait, then Saudi Arabia, and then the rest of the Gulf countries. The daily AL-ANBA' said in its leader today that "'Arafat is saying that he has placed the responsibility of the al-'Aqsa Mosque on the custodian of the two holy mosques, as if King Fahd and his honorable people needed to be reminded by a vile person about this responsibility. The late King Faysal Bin-'Abd- al-'Aziz paid with his life for this responsibility and was assassinated, precisely because he had announced that he shouldered the responsibility for al-'Aqsa Mosque and that he was committed to it." AL-ANBA' asked: "Would be unjust to 'Arafat to remind him of the day when he knelt before his master Saddam, sang the praises of the occupying Iraqi Army, and said he wished that he had part of that occupying army in order to remain in Kuwait for 60 days [as received]?"

PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat said in press statements following his arrival in Riyadh last Sunday that he placed the responsibility of the al-'Aqsa Mosque on the custodian of the two holy mosques.

Saudi Arabia

'Arafat Comments on Discussions With King Fahd

PM2601103894 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 25 Jan 94 pp 1, 4

[Telephone interview with PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat in Jeddah by 'Abdallah Nasir al-Shahri in Riyadh "the day before yesterday evening"]

[Text] [Al-Shahri] Why did you arrive in Jeddah later than originally planned?

['Arafat] I went to console my brother President Hafiz al-Asad after the martyrdom of his son, hero Basil al-Asad. I stopped over in Cairo on my way here.

[Al-Shahri] What will you say to the custodian of the Two Holy Mosques?

['Arafat] I will say a lot of things. I will ask him to shoulder the responsibility for al-Aqsa Mosque, and I am certain he is capable of shouldering this responsibility.

[Al-Shahri] What will you say to the Saudi people?

['Arafat] We will continue to move together until we pray in al-Aqsa Mosque.

[Al-Shahri] But you were not with this people during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait?

['Arafat] I hope that issue will be brought to a close. I said that we will pray together in al-Aqsa Mosque.

[Al-Shahri] Fine. You met with Peres in Oslo. Did your talks with him achieve any progress?

['Arafat] There has been no progress. However, we agreed to continue the talks this week in order to bridge the gaps between us.

[Al-Shahri] Opposition to your policy continues to increase inside and outside the PLO.

['Arafat] We are a democratic state, and every person is entitled to say whatever he likes. We respect others' views.

[Al-Shahri] Kuwaitis say that they have recently discovered weapons and skulls inside the Palestinian embassy. What is your opinion?

['Arafat] Brother, it was a machine gun and a pistol belonging to the ambassador. They must not say that.

[Al-Shahri] What about the skulls?

['Arafat] They must not say that. They are dummies made out of plaster for first aid training.

[Al-Shahri] What will you tell them if they insist these corpses exist?

['Arafat] Let them prove it.

[Al-Shahri] Will your Gulf tour be limited to the Kingdom, or are you going to visit other states like Kuwait, for example?

['Arafat] If I am invited, I will visit them.

[Al-Shahri] You did not tell me what you are going to say to the Saudi people?

['Arafat] Respected brother, I answered your question. I said we will head for al-Aqsa Mosque together. By the way, why are you interrogating me? Good-bye.

'Arafat on Meeting With Fahd

LD2501184094 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine and chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, yesterday evening met King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the custodian of the two holy mosques.

Recent developments on the international and Arab arenas, the developments of the Palestinian issues, and the developments of the peace process in the Middle East were discussed during the meeting.

Brother President Abu-'Ammar thanked King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the custodian of the two holy mosques, for the support offered by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the Palestinian people and their just cause at all levels, as well as for his majesty's principled stances toward the issue of Palestine and holy Jerusalem, capital of the state of Palestine, until our people succeed in restoring all their constant national rights.

Brother Abu-'Ammar stressed the importance of the efforts that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been exerting, under the leadership of the custodian of the two holy mosques, in supporting the Palestinian cause and the steps toward a just peace at all Arab and international levels.

The custodian of the two holy mosques expressed his support for the courageous stances along which the Palestinian leadership has proceeded for securing the rights of the Palestinian people, and stressed that the

Kingdom will continue to support the Palestinian cause until the Palestinian people succeed in obtaining all their rights. [passage omitted]

Afghan Envoy Hands Over Rabbani Message for Fahd

LD2501213894 Riyadh SPA in English 1920 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Riyadh, Jan 25, SPA—The second deputy premier, Minister of Defence and Aviation and Inspector General Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz received here today Afghan presidential adviser Mohammad Seddiq Shukri who handed him a written message to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz from Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani. The meeting was attended by Afghan ambassador to the kingdom Shir Alam Hoqmul. [passage omitted]

United Arab Emirates

Sources Criticize Besharati Comment on Islands

94P50083A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 24 Jan 94 p 5

[Report by Shafiq al-Asadi]

[Excerpts] Abu Dhabi—Diplomatic sources in Abu Dhabi [UAE] have reported that statements by Iranian Interior Minister Mohammad 'Ali Besharati reflect clear inconsistencies in his country's position on its dispute with the UAE over three strategic islands in the Gulf. Besharati described the dispute between Iran and the UAE over "some islands" as "simple" and to be solved "by dialogue." He added in a press conference in Doha yesterday, Saturday, that relations between Iran and the UAE are "good" and have always been good.

Observers think that Besharati's statements, in spite of the fact that they represent the moderate side of Tehran's position on the dispute over the islands, do not offer the truth about the details of the conflict between the UAE and Iran and are not a "suitable" position from which to arrive at a peaceful settlement through direct dialogue.

These observers pointed out that Besharati is talking about solving the dispute over "some islands" without naming them, and that it is known that he means the island of Abu Musa, which has been administrated by a memorandum of understanding between the two countries since 1971. The Iranian interior minister does not mean the Greater and Lesser Tunb Islands, which Iran occupied in 1971. In spite of the fact that Besharati's position "is lacking" and does not offer any practical steps leading to a direct dialogue with the UAE on the matter of the three islands, in the opinion of Gulf political circles it is a more advanced position than that of the Iranian foreign [policy] position. [passage omitted on Iranian official statement]

Observers indicate that Besharati's statement about good relations with the UAE is a new element in the Iranian lexicon and will permit contacts to be made with some parties in the Iranian leadership in Tehran. It appears that the politicians in the UAE are well versed in the inconsistencies in Tehran, since the UAE's ambassador in Tehran, Muhammad Ahmad Bu-Rahimah, has met with the Iranian interior minister, who affirmed after the meeting that "the differences with the UAE are simple." However, political circles in Abu Dhabi do not see such a meeting as a dialogue with Tehran, because the Iranian position, with all its factions, is not considered suitable to conduct a direct dialogue to arrive at a peaceful solution to the islands issue.

UAE Foreign Minister Rashid 'Abdallah al-Nu'aymi states that any meetings with Iranian officials, among them his meeting with 'Ali Akbar Velayati, the foreign minister, on the international and regional conference level, are "contacts" and not "a dialogue." The UAE conditions such a dialogue on Tehran's decision to deal with the three islands in it. [passage omitted on history of the dispute]

Political circles state that the position of Iran on the UAE islands issue will have a great impact in determining the Iranian role and cooperation with the other countries of the region in maintaining security and stability. The eight states that signed "the Damascus declaration" support the UAE's position on the islands issue and its settlement by peaceful means. [passage omitted]

Yemen

Security Arrangements Proceed for Signing Accord

PM2601122494 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 25 Jan 94 pp1, 4

[Reports by Hammud Munsir in Sanaa and Lutfi Shatarah in Aden: "Military Arrangements With Foreign Participation To Ensure Signing of 'Pledge Document'"]

[Text] Yemeni opposition sources have stated that a number of officers from the armies of Jordan and Oman have arrived in Yemen to take part in coordinating the security arrangements for the official signing of the "Pledge Document" for resolving the Yemeni crisis, also with the participation of the U.S. and French military attaches in Sanaa to eliminate the risk of a military clash between the forces of the General People's Congress and the Yemeni Socialist Party, the two parties to the crisis.

Shaykh Sinan Abu-Luhum, leader of the Patriotic Forces Union and chairman of the National Dialogue subcommittee making arrangements for the signing of the "Pledge Document," has told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the alleged controversy over the subcommittee was unfounded and that it did not receive instructions from any party. He said that work was proceeding toward completion of the arrangements, but opposition sources warned that the situation was moving toward confirmation of the existing undeclared secession or toward some kind of foreign trusteeship for the country.

Denying the opposition's claims, Shaykh Abu-Luhum said the arrangements committee is considering all possible options and is eager to reach agreement on a venue and date for the signing "on the basis of comprehensive national grounds, for it is structured to include the coalition parties, the opposition parties, and the independent patriotic forces."

He said that the document "belongs not to any particular parties or political forces but to the Yemeni people who have blessed and supported it because it covers public issues."

Meanwhile, sources close to Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Naji al-Ghadir, chairman of the Higher Council of the Yemeni tribes "Saba'" and chieftain of the Khawlan tribes, have confirmed that he was able to bring about the release of the helicopter belonging to the American company Hunt Oil, which operates in the governorate of Ma'rib, its pilot, and the Indian expert who was with him, after giving the Bani-Jabr tribe (of Khawlan) two Toyota vehicles. [passage omitted]

Al-Bid Urges Military To Abide by Accord Document

JN2601091094 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, vice chairman of the Presidential Council, has asserted that the accord document reached by the Political Forces Dialogue Committee is a document of national consensus. It also represents a new social contract to rectify the course of Yemeni unity and formulate new bases to build a modern Yemeni state in which security, justice, stability, and development prevail.

In a speech he delivered this morning to the commanders of military units, security agencies, and [words indistinct] in the commercial and economic capital, Aden, he said the accord document reflects the Yemeni people's strength and their possession of resources and capabilities that render serious, responsible dialogue a means of finding solutions to problems, away from violence and threats to use force. The accord document also confirms that the Yemeni people have chosen the path of democracy, peaceful, democratic action, and heeding the voice of reason to address the challenges and overcome the obstacles facing the process of unity and democracy.

The vice chairman of the Presidential Council stressed the importance of implementing the items contained in the accord document. He pointed out that the historic value of this document lies in the ability of the masses to translate it into concrete reality in all walks of life. He added that this major national mission requires the efforts of all sincere national forces that seek to build a state with institutions where law and order prevail and democracy and development are achieved.

Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, vice chairman of the Presidential Council, urged the commanders of military and security units to be the first to implement the accord document and to set a good example of how to run units, enhance the principle of discipline, and implement their assigned programs and plans tirelessly. He also urged them to improve the living conditions and boost the morale of the personnel of their institutions and [words indistinct] to enable them to perform their duties by defending the homeland and safeguarding its achievements. He further urged them to demonstrate a serious, sincere position toward the issues of the people and the homeland.

The meeting was attended by Defense Minister brother Brigadier General Haytham Qasim Tahir and several military commanders.

Military Committee Calls For Redeploying Forces

JN2601105394 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] The military committee has continued its field visits to the southwestern axis by visiting the 25th Brigade [words indistinct] and meeting the commanders and troops.

During the meeting, brother Staff Lieutenant General [words indistinct] General Staff for operations and head of the committee, addressed the commanders and troops. At the outset, he conveyed the greetings of brother Lt. Gen. 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council and supreme commander of the Armed Forces, and 'Ali Salim al-Bid, vice chairman of the Presidential Council. He also reviewed the military committee's efforts and duty of inspecting the military situation. He said the drawbacks produced by the transitional phase with regard to the Armed Forces and its personnel should now end. He urged pooling all efforts to overcome all negative phenomena in all military aspects in light of the accord document which hopefully will remedy all ills.

He further urged the commanders and troops to assume their national responsibilities in the current decisive circumstances and to do whatever would restore trust and brotherly communication between troops as a condition for the cohesion of the ranks of the Yemeni Armed Forces.

During the meeting, the members of the military committee also spoke about the importance of Yemeni unity as a historical and national gain. They stressed that Yemeni unity is not up for bargaining. They said the current national issues in the Yemeni arena are national political issues and not differences between the two parts of Yemen.

They also emphasized that safeguarding Yemeni unity is the duty and goal of all honorable people in the Yemeni arena. They further stressed that responsibility for national security is a prime duty of the state of unity and its institutions. This duty is primarily the responsibility of the units and formations of the Yemeni Armed Forces, which should be redeployed on this basis so as to enable the homeland to have a unified identity.

Also during the meeting, the unit commanders welcomed the military committee, affirming that the commanders and troops are aware of their national responsibilities and the Armed Forces' duty to protect Yemen.

Indonesian Foreign Minister Alatas Arrives on Visit

Meets With Foreign Minister

JN2401144194 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 24 Jan 94

[Text] An official round of Yemeni-Indonesian talks was held at the Foreign Ministry today. Foreign Minister Muhammad Salim Basindwah led our country's delegation to the talks, and Foreign Minister Ali Alatas led the Indonesian delegation.

The two sides reviewed bilateral relations, means of promoting them, regional and international developments, ways to promote the Nonaligned Movement's role, and the establishment of relations of cooperation between developing and industrialized states. The two sides also signed an economic, technical, scientific, and trade cooperation agreement as a general framework to organize relations between the two countries.

Meets With Salih in Sanaa

JN2601080494 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] At his office in the Presidential Palace today, brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council, received visiting Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas.

Ali Alatas conveyed a message to the brother president from Indonesian President Muhammad Suharto. The message deals with bilateral relations, cooperation, and issues of interest to our Islamic nation.

During the meeting, there was a review of bilateral relations and cooperation and ways of enhancing them in the interest of both countries, which share strong historical ties.

The Indonesian foreign minister expressed his appreciation for the warm welcome he has received and admiration of our country's political achievements and development process, primarily unity and democracy. He also expressed Indonesia's desire to promote its relations with Yemen and to expand trade, technical, and industrial cooperation with our country.

For his part, the chairman of the Presidential Council praised Yemeni-Indonesian relations, pointing out that they are special and historical relations based on Islamic brotherhood, a cultural dimension, and trade between the two countries. He also affirmed our country's eagerness to promote these ties to achieve the hopes of the two peoples. He noted that there are many opportunities to develop cooperation, especially in investment. In this regard, he said our country's investment law provides a good climate and gives guarantees and good opportunities for investors in all fields.

The brother president also asked the Indonesian foreign minister to convey his greetings to President Suharto and his best wishes for the Indonesian people for more progress and prosperity.

The audience was attended by Foreign Minister Muhammad Salim Basindwah, the members of the delegation accompanying the Indonesian foreign minister, and the Indonesian ambassador to our country.

Meets al-Bid, al-'Attas in Aden

JN2601080694 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Excerpts] Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, vice chairman of the Presidential Council, received in Aden this evening visiting Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas.

Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid welcomed his brother the Indonesian foreign minister and his delegation, wishing them a pleasant stay in their second homeland, Yemen. He underlined the longstanding historical and cultural ties between the two countries, affirming our country's eagerness to promote cooperation with Indonesia. [passage omitted]

Also, Prime Minister Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas received this evening in the commercial and economic capital, Aden, the visiting Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas. [passage omitted]

Saddam Husayn Receives Iranian Resistance Figure

JN2601145594 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1440 GMT 26 jan 94

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Jan (INA)—His Excellency leader President Saddam Husayn today received Mr. Mas'ud Rajavi, head of the Iranian National Resistance Council.

The meeting was attended by Tariq 'Aziz, member of the Revolutionary Command Council and deputy prime minister.

Security in South Reportedly 'Deteriorating'

NC2501193694 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Excerpts] Most areas in southern Iraq are facing deteriorating security and economic conditions amid reports of escalating jihad operations by the Islamic resistance forces against the security and intelligence services of the tyrant Saddam.

Travelers from southern Iraq told our correspondent that al-Basrah and adjacent areas were recently the scene of jihad operations, which claimed the lives of several of the tyrant's security and ruling party officials, including a senior party official in al-Basrah. [passage omitted]

The travelers added that Islamic resistance fighters hijacked the car of the regime's interior minister and its driver in December 1993. Following this daring operation, they released the driver and asked him to convey a threatening message to the criminal Interior Minister Watban. [passage omitted]

According to our exclusive news reports, the regime of the tyrant Saddam has been imposing what looks like a military siege on Baghdad and its environs. Republican Guard brigades are deployed in al-Rashidiyah, al-Suwayrah, and along the road to al-Ramadi.

Our sources add that the regime's organs of oppression have conducted extensive arrests of innocent citizens since the beginning of January. Recently, the arrests were conspicuous in al-Hillah after this city was cordoned-off by Republican Guard brigades. The arrests were on a scale not seen the suppression of the eternal Sha'ban [March 1991] uprising.

Foreign Minister on Oil Pipeline Talks in Baghdad

TA2501210194 Ankara TRT Television Network in Turkish 1800 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Interview with Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf by Husnu Kaftan in Baghdad on 25 January—recorded; in Arabic with superimposed translation into Turkish]

[Text] [Kaftan] Mr. Minister, the talks in connection with the Karkuk-Yumurtalik oil pipeline were held between the Turkish and Iraqi foreign ministry officials in Ankara on 8-9 January. As you know, the UN resolutions still stand. How will this problem be resolved?

[Al-Sahhaf] As you know, the under secretaries of the Turkish and Iraqi Foreign Ministries met in Ankara upon the invitation of the Turkish side. The oil pipeline issue was particularly discussed during the Ankara talks. The crude oil in the pipeline must be emptied out and the pipeline must be refilled to prevent rotting and to maintain it. We have been suggesting this to the Turkish side for a long time. We should not wait any longer. Turkey suffered great economic loss because the pipeline was closed down. The international economic embargo imposed on Iraq greatly affected Turkey as well. Turkey suffered great damages. Turkey can extract certain resolutions from the United Nations to compensate for its losses.

Minister Tariq 'Aziz Receives Arab League Envoy

JN2501194594 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz received ambassador Mayhub al-Mayhubi, envoy of the Arab League, this evening.

The meeting was attended by Foreign Ministry Under Secretary Dr. Riyad al-Qaysi.

Jordanian Minister Hails Country's 'Steadfastness'

JN2501175394 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Jordanian Transport Minister Adib Halasah has affirmed that the Iraqi people's steadfastness under leader President Saddam Husayn in the face of the treacherous 30-state aggression has thwarted the imperialist-Zionist schemes to undermine Iraq's sovereignty and national unity.

During a meeting with the Babil deputy governor today, Halasah indicated that stepped-up hostile conspiracies against the march of great Iraq were the inevitable outcome of the growth of Iraq's pan- Arab role in the efforts to rehabilitate the Arab nation's values and principles and confront external ambitions in the region.

The Jordanian minister visited the historical city of Babylon and acquainted himself with its archaeological and historical sites.

Arab League Notified of 21-23 Jan Air Incursions

JN2601140094 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1100 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 26 Jan (INA)—Iraq has informed the general secretariat of the Arab League that Saudi and Kuwaiti rulers continue to make base facilities available to American, British, and French aircraft to violate Iraqi airspace. A letter from Iraq's permanent Arab League delegate to its secretary general also points out that the action poses a serious threat to Iraq's sovereignty and national unity.

Last Friday, Saturday, and Sunday [21, 22, 23 January], these aircraft mounted 148 sorties, having taken off from Saudi and Kuwaiti bases.

Iraq's delegate asked that the letter be circulated among the League members.

UN Disarmament Official Ends 'Very Productive' Visit

NC2601112594 Paris AFP in English 1047 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Baghdad, Jan 26 (AFP)—The UN's deputy disarmament chief on Wednesday wound up a "very productive" mission here to discuss long term monitoring of Iraq's weapons programme.

American Charles Duelfer, deputy head of the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) disarming Iraq under Gulf War ceasefire resolutions, spent five days here preparing next week's visit by his boss Rolf Ekeus.

"The discussions have been very productive" on implementing Security Council Resolution 715, which orders long term monitoring of Iraq's weapons programme, Duelfer said as he left for New York via Cyprus.

The surveillance programme is the next UN step following the destruction of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction after the Gulf war of January-February 1991.

Ekeus arrives next Wednesday to discuss long-term monitoring, but has said he is unlikely to recommend a lifting of sanctions before the end of the year.

Iraq has been lobbying hard for an end to the embargo imposed after the invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.

Duelfer had talks with General 'Amr Rashid, head of the military industrialisation organisation, and visited several military sites.

Setting up the monitoring "is a complicated procedure which will require the sustained efforts of both the government of Iraq and UNSCOM" he said.

"Iraq has provided additional detailed information on facilities which we are evaluating."

His talks here covered details of the monitoring, including inspections, sensors and cameras.

Iraq agreed to the surveillance in November after rejecting it for three years.

"Significant progress has beenb made and much remains to be done" Duelfer added.

A team of 16 inspectors led by Russian Nikita Smidovitch arrived with Duelfer on Friday for a 10 day inspection mission.

Rabin: Syria Ready To Sign Separate Peace Accord

TA2601055894 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Excerpts] Speaking at a dinner with leaders of European Jewish communities in Strasbourg last night, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said that Syria has informed Israel of its willingness to sign a separate peace agreement, unlinked to agreements with other parties. Today Rabin will address a plenum of the Council of Europe. Gid'on Kouts reports from Strasbourg:

[Begin Kouts recording] The Syrians gave an affirmative reply to a question posed by an Israeli representative in the Washington talks as to whether an agreement with Syria will stand on its own two feet—namely, be unlinked to arrangements with other countries or parties. The Syrians said that for them, such an agreement is part of a comprehensive arrangement. This was announced by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin at a dinner with European Jewish leaders in Strasbourg.

Israeli sources said that the Syrian statement, made yesterday, means the Syrians are prepared to sign a separate agreement with Israel, a departure from the Syrian stand in President al-Asad's Geneva talks with Bill Clinton. After that meeting, the U.S. peace team reported that al-Asad made any agreement and normal relations with Israel contingent on the settlement of issues such as the right of return and Jerusalem. In Rabin's opinion, this is an encouraging reply reflecting a Syrian readiness to achieve a peace agreement with Israel. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Our correspondent adds that Yitzhaq Rabin further noted there is no room for saying that an agreement with the PLO is imminent. A source in his entourage was pessimistic about prospects for attaining such an agreement by the end of this week.

Rabin also said he did not think Jordan would be the first or second country to sign a peace agreement with Israel.

Aide Denies Rabin Said Syria 'Ready'

TA2601112894 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin told Jewish leaders in a meeting in Strasbourg that Syria is now ready for a peace agreement with Israel that would be independent of arrangements with other Arab states. Israeli sources told Qol Yisra'el correspondent Gid'on Kouts that the news indicated that Damascus is ready to negotiate a separate peace treaty with Israel. However, a senior aide to the prime minister denied reports quoting Rabin as saying Syria was ready for a separate deal with Israel. The aide said Syria stated that a peace treaty with Israel would be valid no matter what happened in Israel's relations with other Arab countries. The aide also said that Rabin had received answers from Syria to long-standing questions about a future peace treaty.

Delegates Head to Cairo To Meet PLO Officials

TA2501193194 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Excerpt] A development in the political process: An Israeli delegation made up of Uri Savir and Yo'el Singer, respectively the Foreign Ministry's director general and legal adviser, left for Cairo this evening to confer with PLO officials led by Abu-al-'Ala' [Ahmad Quray']. They will apparently attempt to finalize the understandings between the sides in anticipation of the Peres- 'Arafat meeting this weekend in Davos. [passage omitted] h1 Committee Plans Boundaries for 'Greater Jerusalem'

TA2601115094 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 26 Jan 94 p A3

[Report by Nadav Shragay]

[Text] The joint government and Jerusalem Municipality committee of experts is recommending to the political echelon to try to reach a situation where by 2010 there will be 1.8 million inhabitants in what the government in 1987 defined as the greater Jerusalem area —Bet El in the north, Hebron in the south, Mitzpe Yeriho in the east, and Bet Shemesh in the west.

The committee of experts was appointed three years ago at the government's request to plan greater Jerusalem. When two of its members were asked what the viability of the plan was in the wake of the signing of the Declaration of Principles for self-government, they replied that the issue is not their concern and that they had studied the metropolitan problems from an expert's point of view. Arnon Yequti'eli, head of the Meretz faction in Jerusalem Municipality, believes that the plan is part of the municipality's almost racist pettiness by constantly taking into account the numerical relationship between the Palestinian and Israeli populations.

There are currently some 1.2 million inhabitants in the area. The committee of experts recommends a series of moves to change the current demographic relationship from 55 percent Palestinians and 45 percent Jews, to 52 percent Palestinians and 48 percent Jews by 2010. Jerusalem Municipality tends in principle to be for adopting the recommendations, with minor additions and changes, and hopes to convince the government to embrace them.

Two of the committee leaders, who presented the findings to Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert this week, believe that if a series of moves to build in and expand greater Jerusalem—especially in the areas annexed after 1967—are not taken quickly, Jerusalem is likely to become "a dead-end city" with Palestinian building closing in on the city from the south, north, and east, and blocking its ability to expand. The two, Shemaryahu Kohen, formerly head of the Jerusalem District in the Construction and Housing Ministry, and Professor Adam Mazur, maintain that Jerusalem will wither both in the urban and economic fields if large areas within the metropolitan area are not designated territorial reserves set aside for the town's expansion.

In order to achieve that aim, the two said, the committee recommends expanding Ma'ale Adumim in the direction of Jerusalem, linking it up territorially with Pisgat Ze'ev, linking Giv'at Ze'ev to the Ramot neighborhood, and expanding the 'Etzyon Bloc in the direction of the town of Betar and the 'Adulam region.

The coordinator of the steering committee is Yisra'el Kimche, of the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Research, and its members include Jerusalem Municipal Engineer Elino'ar Brocci, Yohanatan Golani of the Interior Ministry, Sofia Lidor of the Construction and Housing Ministry, and Mikha'el Tirkin of the Israel Lands Authority.

The team proposes creating "joint Jewish-Arab zones" along Highway 45, between Modi'in and 'Atarot, where economic projects will be set up.

One of the team's guidelines is that political or other boundaries should not block the setting up of "a single voting area" for the population of greater Jerusalem.

In a letter of response sent to Olmert, Meretz faction leader Yequti'eli said that since 1967 "successive Israeli Governments and Jerusalem Municipality have been conducting a clear policy of expelling Palestinians from Jerusalem, either through mass confiscations of land or the destruction of hundreds of houses. The only approved project, the al-Nusaybah housing project, was also implemented because of the need to house people expelled from the Old City after the 1967 war and the evacuation of the square in front of the Western Wall.

"At first 'we fought' over the relationship between Jews and Arabs in the city of Jerusalem, and when that was decided, we began to take stock of the numbers of Jews and Arabs in East Jerusalem and the territories annexed to it. We have now reached a clear Jewish majority there too. In fact, so much so that the Palestinians from Jerusalem—tens of thousands of them—have been pushed out of town and have gone to live in al-Ram, al-'Ayzariyah, and other places. The latest stock taking is over the numerical relationship in the greater Jerusalem area. There is no significance—and should be none—to a numerical relationship between Jerusalem and the Palestinian towns and villages, such as Bethlehem and Ramallah, which are due to come under Palestinian autonomy and the future Palestinian state anyway," Yequti'eli wrote.

IDF Denies Reinforcing Troops in South Lebanon

TA2501193394 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Senior IDF [Israel Defense Forces] officers have denied reports that the IDF reinforced its troops in the security zone in south Lebanon and that a small unit crossed the boundary of the security zone to conduct searches. The officers told our correspondent Yo'av Aviv that the IDF did not conduct any particular activity in the area today.

IDF Shell Reportedly Kills SLA Soldier

TA2601123994 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 26 Jan 94 p A1

[Report by military correspondent Eytan Rabin]

[Excerpt] Northern Command commander Yitzhaq Mordekhay has ordered a wide-ranging inquiry of the command and the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] liaison unit in South Lebanon into how an IDF 155-mm shell was fired at an SLA [South Lebanese Army] outpost in the central sector causing the death of an SLA soldier and the wounding of two others.

Major General Mordekhay was surprised Monday [24 January] night when he was informed by Brigadier General G., commander of the liaison unit, that IDF guns were responsible for shelling the SLA post and the death of the soldier. The mistaken shelling was carried out when terrorists tried to attack the SLA outpost in the 'Alman-al-Shumariyah area. The terrorists lobbed mortars rounds and launched Sagger antitank missiles. In response, the IDF and SLA returned artillery fire, foiling an attempt to overrun the outpost.

The investigation has so far shown that the IDF fired many shells at the outpost, and one of them apparently fell inside the post causing the death of the soldier and the wounding of two others. [passage omitted]

Riots Break Out Following Fatah Fugitives' Arrest

TA2601074694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] An IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldier was slightly injured by gunshots fired by a terrorist in downtown Gaza. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that the terrorist, who wielded a Galil rifle and a copy of the Koran, called out God Is Great and fired at the troops. They fired back, critically wounding the assailant. Army and Border Police troops summoned to the site cordoned it off and launched an investigation.

Three armed fugitives, members of the Fatah Hawks, were captured in an undercover unit operation in Gaza's al-Shaykh Radwan neighborhood last night. When captured, the fugitives had a Carl Gustav submachine gun and two handguns in their possession. Their detention was followed by riots in the neighborhood. IDF troops detained eight local residents who tried to prevent the arrests.

Shahal on Nuclear Power Station Development

TA2601151494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Israel has invested $10 million over the last few years to develop a nuclear power station, but the plan was eventually shelved due to pressures exerted by European environmentalists on the company intended to build the reactor. This was divulged by Energy and Infrastructure Minister Moshe Shahal, who added that the reactor slated for Israel was one of several power stations developed by a Swiss company and the German Government and $10 billion had already been invested in the project. The environmentalists claim these power stations are not safe. According to Shahal Israel will wait for a clean and safe nuclear technology to be developed before it establishes a nuclear power station. Mr. Shahal made these remarks in the International Conference for Nuclear Sciences in Tel Aviv.

No-Confidence Motion Submitted Over Graves

TA2501193594 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] United Torah Jewry [UTJ] has submitted a motion of no-confidence in the government due to the desecration and neglect of the Jewish graves in the cemetery on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. Our correspondent Yo'el Nir reports that the Knesset will discuss the motion next Monday [31 January]. UTJ says the desecration of Jewish graves in the Mount of Olives has been going on for a long time despite recurrent complaints to the police and Police Minister Moshe Shahal's promise from the Knesset podium to increase security there. UTJ notes that the grave of Rabbi Yitzhaq Me'ir Levin, a former minister of social welfare in an Israeli Government, was vandalized last Saturday.

Rabbi Reportedly Flees To Morocco To Convert to Islam

LD2501201094 Tehran IRNA in English 1828 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Athens, Jan. 25, IRNA—Zionist authorities have imposed a news blackout on the conversion of a Jewish rabbi to Islam who fled to Morocco recently, Arab weekly paper 'AL-MUSLIMUN' reported in its latest issue. The former rabbi is now preaching Islam in a mosque in Morocco after he abandoned his Jewish faith. The newspaper, published in Jeddah, did not mention the name of the rabbi nor when he fled to Morocco.

Jewish religious circles around the world are greatly concerned about the issue and some Zionist groups have called on the Zionist regime in occupied Palestine to demand the extradition of the former rabbi and to put him on trial for deserting his faith.

King Husayn Continues Visit to Washington

Meets With Perry at Pentagon

JN2601112894 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 0800 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn yesterday met with William Perry, the U.S. secretary of defense designate, at the U.S. Pentagon. His majesty was accorded an official reception and a 21-gun salute upon arrival at the Pentagon. A band played the Jordanian and U.S. national anthems.

His Majesty King Husayn held a closed meeting with Mr. Perry, followed by an expanded meeting attended by officials from both sides.

At the outset of the meeting, his majesty congratulated William Perry on his designation as secretary of defense. His majesty underlined the depth of Jordanian-U.S. relations in general and the depth of relations between the Armed Forces of the two friendly countries in particular. He noted the need to support and develop the Jordanian Armed Forces to enable them to assume their significant role of protecting security and stability in the region and preserving the democratic march in Jordan.

His majesty reviewed with the U.S. secretary designate the positive developments in the peace process, stressing the need to achieve the just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the Middle East region, which was for decades victim to conflict and tension.

His majesty voiced satisfaction with the progress of talks in the joint Jordanian-U.S. military committee and urged the U.S. side to show more understanding of the needs of the Jordanian Armed Forces and the need to develop them in order to enable them to bear their responsibilities in protecting security and stability in the region.

For his part, the U.S. secretary of defense designate stressed that his country understands and appreciates Jordan's prominent and important role in protecting security and stability in the region and contribution toward peace in the Middle East. He also voiced appreciation of the role played by the Jordanian Armed Forces in this regard and his country's interest in supporting and developing these forces to enable them to continue to shoulder their responsibilities. He stressed that the U.S. team on the joint U.S.-Jordanian military committee will work hand in hand with the Jordanian team to specify the means of backing and developing the Jordanian Armed Forces.

The meeting was attended for Jordan by Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, the prime minister; al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, chief of the Royal Hashemite Court; Marwan al-Qasim, his majesty the king's political adviser; Dr. Fayiz al-Tarawinah, Jordan's ambassador in Washington; and General 'Abd-al-Hafiz Mar'i al-Ka'abinah, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The meeting was attended on the U.S. side by General Shalikashvili, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff; Frank Wisner, deputy secretary of defense for political affairs; and a number of U.S. Defense Department officials.

Addresses Foreign Affairs Council

JN2601125794 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1200 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] His majesty the king says he has the honor of calling for the kind of peace which future generations can accept and live with. In a speech he made last night at the invitation of the Foreign Affairs Council in Washington, his majesty said Jordan is determined to continue the democratic process which it is proud of and also seeks to be an example for others to follow.

His majesty said that the Middle East region has suffered a great deal from tension and disputes and that Jordan has always sought to attain comprehensive and just peace in this region of the world.

Speaking about the Middle East peace process, his majesty the king said he believed that there will be substantial progress on all tracks, particularly the Syrian-Israeli track and that this progress will take place soon.

His majesty called for the resolution of all outstanding problems facing the Middle East after which a peace agreement would follow. He said he hoped that this point could be reached before too long.

Meets Qatari Foreign Minister

JN2601091794 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 0800 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Excerpt] His Majesty King Husayn today received Qatari Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabbur Al Thani at his place of residence in Washington.

During the meeting, his majesty stressed to the minister the need for Arab coordination, as well as the need to revive solidarity and unify the stands and views of the Arab brothers, particularly at this critical phase in the life of the Arab nation. He said the challenges facing the nation dictate that efforts and energies should be pooled together to ensure the minimum level of Arab solidarity and coordination that would benefit all peoples of the nation, strengthen the ties existing among them, and protect the interests of the nation and its future generations. [passage omitted]

Addresses Jewish Leaders

JN2601071294 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1854 GMT 25 Jan 94

["Text" of a meeting between King Husayn and several leaders of the U.S. Jewish community in Washington on 24 January—recorded; in English]

[Text] [Husayn] Ladies and gentlemen, it really is a pleasure for me to have this opportunity together with [Queen] Nur, the prime minister of Jordan, members of our Jordanian group on this visit to Washington, to meet with you, and I hope that in the spirit of friendship and optimism that we have for the present and the future regarding the tremendous and important developments that have occurred of late in our part of the world, which I hope will see us coming together as the children of Abraham in a land and an area that has had such an impact on civilization and on mankind [sentence as heard]. I am happy that this meeting takes place, and I have had the pleasure in the past, from time to time, to meet some of you. I certainly hope that we will meet again regularly, that we will convey also my feelings of determination, on one hand, and total commitment to the cause of a just, honorable, lasting peace that future generations can live with, can protect, can enjoy in our region; our determination to achieve this goal; and our optimism despite the difficulties over the fact that there is no other option. There is no other alternative. The growing realization of this fact in our region, amongst all peoples, and beyond that, it's our duty to do whatever we can for the generations to come beyond, to give them a better chance, to give them a better life, to give them what they deserve long after we are gone.

We welcome you to this meeting, and we hope that we will convey to our friends in the United States our greetings and the essence of our hopes and determination to make progress toward the attainment of peace. Rather than continue myself now any further, I would like to give everyone the opportunity, and to start—well some of you might have known whenever we have met in the past—to start a dialogue and maybe to answer any questions that you may have. Once again, you are most welcomed. Thank you so much. [applause]

[Unidentified speaker] Your majesty, we (?met) with you a number of times in the past, in the 80's, and also at occasions. It was very clear to us, as it has been to the State of Israel, that the Kingdom of Jordan, under the right circumstances, was ready to enter into peaceful arrangements with the State of Israel, even as you made clear to us every time we met that it is not for Jordan—it was not for you—to negotiate on behalf of the Palestinians. An obstacle has been removed. There is now someone to negotiate with. And may I now, on behalf of all of us here, simply wish your majesty and her majesty the queen a life of good health, a long life, and a life which sees where you and we can see, not only that the State of Israel and the Kingdom of Jordan are living in peace together, but that both of them are living in a peaceful and prosperous Middle East. I don't want to ask you any questions, but if I can be of help in finding those who do.... Mr. (Smarling).

[(Smarling)] Your majesty: Last Friday, the crown prince had an interview that was published in the Israeli press. And he said some words that were very moving to us and also—we know—to many Israelis. The crown prince said we want a warm peace with Israel, and he mentioned some of the projects—the economic projects—that would be part of a warm peace. Could you elaborate a little bit on this, about what a warm peace means to you? And what would be some of its components?

[Husayn] Thank you very much indeed, Sir. And once again, may I thank you for your comments and say how happy I am, Sir, that we meet again under these circumstances here in Washington at this very exciting and very, very interesting moment. You are quite right, Sir, in terms of the problem as it evolved. We have always sought, to the best of our abilities, to promote the cause of a just, comprehensive peace in our region. After the adoption of Security Council Resolution 242, we tried our very best to see its implementation through. That, unfortunately, was not possible at the time. Israel looked at us as a country that had been one that had actually occupied another land and had been driven out of it. In 1974, an Arab summit saw the whole Arab world respond to a Palestinian wish that they speak for themselves regarding their future. And so we acceded to that, and I have honored our commitment there ever since. Our Israeli neighbors, at a certain moment in time, following 1974, started to ask us to be the negotiating partner over Palestinian affairs and Palestinian fate and future. But it was impossible. So it has taken all these years until finally Madrid, following the tremendous events that occurred in our world and the growing realization in the area that we must really resolve this problem. Madrid, and we provided the umbrella for the Palestinians to enable them to speak for themselves. And Moscow. And the multilaterals. And then Washington. And, as you say, September 13th, a tremendous step forward. And I have described it as a very courageous one by Israel and by the Palestinians in terms of mutual recognition and the beginning of a process. So we supported that and will continue to support it. And again, Sir, we have, in terms of the facts, we've....[pauses] Go back to Madrid, we started at the same point, all of us, all the parties concerned. Palestine and the Palestinian cause has been very, very close to our hearts and is [words indistinct]. September 13th is of great significance because it saw the Palestinians move on their own and begin a process. September 14th saw us ratify an agenda that had been held back until we saw some progress on the Palestinian-Israeli dimension. The agenda is not a peace treaty. The agenda is areas of concern to all of us. But we hope very sincerely that we will see progress on all the items in that agenda as rapidly as possible to arrive at satisfactory answers and solutions to all the problems there. We have suggested that we will implement whatever we agree upon, that there should be symmetry—the problems should be placed in baskets here and there. But we should ensure that we sensitize people to the results of peace and to the promise of peace as we move along. Unfortunately, in the minds of some, this might have created the impression that we are talking about arrangements, agreements here and there that would be implemented, but that we are not committed to ratifying a peace treaty. I would like to say categorically here that we are committed, at the end of the process, once we have resolved all these problems, that the crowning achievement will be the ratification of a peace treaty.

I don't believe there is any contradiction between that fact and the fact that we have always sought a comprehensive settlement in the region and that we will work and do our utmost to ensure that that comes within that context as well, so that the whole area moves from where we are to where we should be—to where we should have been.

The areas of concern, Sir, are many. But, let me give you an example of what my brother, probably, had in mind, and what I have examined with my colleagues, what we have talked about in Jordan. For example, we have a border problem, and in particular in the southern area, the Dead Sea right down to the Gulf of al-'Aqabah. Well, in the period after 1967, Israeli forces sort of moved into Jordanian territory without war, without fighting. For security reasons, we couldn't do very much about it at that time, but we registered the fact. We would like to see progress made as soon as possible to resolve this particular problem—the problem of territorial sovereignty, of border demarcation and delineation. We are calling for a committee to look at this subject as rapidly as possible, and I hope that this will lead, obviously, to meetings on the ground there at important high levels. Once this is done—as opposed to suggestions that maybe Jordan can lease land—Jordan cannot. This is Jordanian land. Then, we will look at the whole Rift Valley as an economic unit, and we will look at everything that we can do to make it so. To see what benefits can be derived of our joint efforts to make that one of the most important elements of the coming peace, be it in terms of mineral resources, in terms of communications, in terms of the environment, in terms of—so many other elements that would come along, as well.

This is something that we hope will happen and will begin to see realized sometime soon, and this leads onto the environmental questions, fighting desertification and dealing with that. Another area is water, and that is very, very important to all of us. So, again, we hope that very, very soon we will concentrate on that and see what can be done to ensure that the future is bright, at least in terms of the rights of all of us, on one hand, and then what can be done beyond that because I don't believe that the resources available in the area are sufficient to all of us. This is a problem that is very much on our minds. We cannot ignore it, and we have to look at other ways and means by which we can provide the water that is needed within our region.

In the Camp David accords, there is an area or an item that deals with a road that would link Egypt, and therefore Arab North Africa, with the Arab World and that would pass through Elat. We have suggested recently that: Why not? Let us look at that at this time and, hopefully, see what can be done because that will be a very important step forward, as well. There are many other related issues and possibilities. Nothing has been settled, nothing has been discussed, maybe, in-depth as yet, but, for example, we were looking at linking our national grid system with the Egyptian one through a cable under the Gulf of al-'Aqabah. Do we need to do that now? Or can we look at a much more logical way of approaching this particular problem? Tourism, movement of people.

These are just some areas which my brother probably touched on in his thoughts as he made the statements to the Israeli paper, I believe the YEDI'OT AHARANOT, if I am not mistaken, in Amman. The other important element, of course, is the question of people. I think we all know that Jordan has borne the results of every disaster that has beset our area and our region and has had an impact on the Palestinians, our brethren. We are very anxious to see what can be done and to bring about a change in the quality of life. The priority has to go, obviously, to Gaza and the West Bank, to the occupied territories. But beyond that, we have to look at the whole region and what can peace bring with it. On the human level in that regard, there is a pending problem, as well, which we hope to address, and that is the reunification of families, in terms of those who legally should be reunited with their families in the occupied territories. There is so much that is being done, so much that we are doing to the best of our abilities, in every area, and I hope that the results, not only of our efforts, but of the commitment and efforts of all concerned, will produce the results that all of us hope, something entirely different and may be too difficult for me to speak about in terms of limitations or scope at such a meeting.

[(Sigmond)] You stressed in your comments the importance of comprehensiveness, and you said that you would like to see the whole area move from where we are to where we ought to be. In the past, this principle of comprehensiveness has served as an element to moving the area from where it is to where it ought to be because of the reluctance on the part of many of the players to take initiatives that would move the process forward for fear that the rest of the Arab world is not moving along. To what extent do you believe in the light of the agreement on September 13th, more recently the meeting between President al-Asad and President Clinton and what was said there, to what extent does this free bilateral movement that is not dependent on the most common denominator in the region? Could you speak to us on that subject?

[Husayn] Thank you very much indeed, and I once again very happy indeed that the level of confidence in the area and dialogue that is going on at this time is something that I have not seen over the years. If you take Jordan and Syria, for example, we are constantly in touch. I am very happy to hear the results of the meeting between President Clinton and President al-Asad. I have every confidence that there is, on behalf of the Arab parties concerned, a total desire and commitment to the cause of a just comprehensive peace. So I personally see that it is going to begin to manifest itself hopefully sometime soon in terms of real progress on other tracks. But in that regard, I wanted to make it abundantly clear. As far as we are concerned, we are moving. We started at the same point. We have the same objective. We are moving on our own to deal with all the problems that we have to deal with and address, leading to the ratification of a peace treaty as a crowning achievement. We would certainly hope and pray that our efforts will also succeed in encouraging others to move and in seeing other movement in a meaningful way so that we arrive at our objective that we have sought for so long, of a comprehensive peace. But regarding the seriousness of the Jordanians in terms of the negotiating process now, we are very serious, we are determined, and we will put our best efforts to see rapid movement and achieve results. The timeframe is beyond me to be able to determine at this stage, but I hope it would not be long before we see that happen. So, in other words, we are not tying ourselves down to anything except the determination to move and more rapidly. We hope and we believe and we will work for our efforts to result in peace, and, at the same time, hopefully we will see that not only on the Jordanian- or Palestinian-Israeli track but also regarding Syria and Lebanon so that we have finally what we have always sought, a comprehensive peace in the region. In other words, we are our own masters in terms of our fate and our destiny. We are determined to do whatever we can, but we believe that in the interest of all and future generations in the region and in the interest of the security of all the coming generations, we have to work for a comprehensive peace. That does not mean that we should wait until everybody else deals with their problems, we are also approaching these problems very, very seriously.

There has been some ambiguity or some difference of opinion or some cause for confusion. We have been called upon to ratify a peace treaty. Some suggestions were that we should ratify it on this visit of mine, here, on the occasion of my visit to the United States for a medical checkup. And very frankly my friends, I don't believe this is the right approach. We do not ratify a peace treaty and then begin to negotiate what it should contain. We negotiate and work out all the problems so that you don't have any left once you have peace. And this is the way we are going about. Thank you, Sir.

[Al Moses] Al Moses, your Majesty. Could you foresee Jordan's role in the territories in the intermediate period and beyond. Is federation still a concept that has been [word indistinct]. Will Jordan have a significant economic role, beyond simply having the dinar the official currency. Do you foresee Jordanian banks as being the principle banking institutions in the territories; education for school children coming from your Ministry of Education and [words indistinct] so that you have a cultural, economic, and in time perhaps political bond between the territories and the Kingdom of Jordan, or do you see an independent Palestinian state that has friendly relations but is independent, culturally, economically, and politically with the Kingdom of Jordan?

[Husayn] I can only see, based on the very close relations of members of one family in that region, that the future will see us coming closer together. But with all due respect to all those who have suggested federation or confederation or any other formula at this stage, I have asked for example President 'Arafat to drop that from his vocabulary when he talks with me the term confederation, because this does not come, Sir, as a result of the wish of an individual or even a group of people. This has got to be something that develops and matures over time. We are very, very close together, but there has been a lot of damage done over the years. Many misconceptions, many impressions that we had designs over the fate of our brethern. We had supported them and we will continue to support them to the best of our ability, will help. And the future has to be something that is built from the grassroots upwards.

So in the coming phase, I see our role as one of supporting Palestinians to the best of our ability, in every way we can, and helping them to move ahead and hopefully, eventually, people will work out what the relations ought to be. I personally believe that in Palestine, as is the case in Jordan, there is a yearning for democracy, there is a yearning for institutions that insure that people have a say regarding their future, that this is inevitable, this will come about. So may be it is premature to speak about how it will all shape up but I am sure the links and the ties are there and they will develop and grow.

In the meantime, as far as Jordan is concerned and all members of our Jordanian family, regardless of their origins, we shall remain one family. And we shall remain determined to ensure that nothing touches this fact in any form or way, adversely. If and when people have another option, have another choice, individually or collectively, then we will look at that and they are free to do whatever they wish. Jordan, as you know, is the only Arab state that shared everything with its Palestinian brethern and members of the Palestinian family. And again, we do have problems in terms of the long run. We have to ensure that people—if we are talking about the legalities of it—have the right to either return or be compensated or return and be compensated, or certainly be compensated. But somehow we hope that in the context of peace, in the context of movement to change the shape of things in our area, we will see a difference, we will see a change in the quality of life for people. We will see them have more chances to live the kind of life that they deserve, we will see the narrowing of gaps, and therefore, the removal of fears and suspicions that existed over so many years. We will see the children of Abraham come together in that part of the world and everywhere.

[Unidentified speaker] Your Majesty, many of us around the table who have been a kind of antidote to those in our community who would encourage the abandonment of the peace process, we ourselves were encouraged in September that, at the beginning of the process, we would see the alleviation of the Arab boycott against

Israel in very serious ways. We understand that it is on the agenda of a meeting of the foreign ministers—we have read soon—and I wonder if you could please give some of your own insight and observation on the possibility of any level of that boycott being officially removed at that time, to help us out with our community.

[Husayn] Sure, Sir, and I think that it's a good idea to discuss this in the following way and may be to clarify again some of the misunderstandings about it. Sir, if you look at the Palestinian-Israeli dimension, or Jordan, Palestine, and Israel, it is something different to the boycott, let's say, of companies that have subsidiaries in Israel. I think that that kind of situation that might have lasted in the past is probably on the way towards being removed and addressed. But we have problems which, again, we have to discuss in the times ahead and it is I think an item of concern for us and hopefully will be part of the coming negotiations. For example, Sir, and practically since 1970, Israeli restrictions on Jordanian exports to the occupied territories has cost Jordan $2 billion, deficit. As a result of these policies, Israel has gained a trade surplus of 7.5 billion. So, what I'm trying to say is that we have two problems here, Sir. How do we address them, we hope that we will address the immediate one as it concerns us, and certainly the other one as it concerns other international concerns. I think that is being resolved very, very soon. I hope we will address this one to see that the protectionism that exists does not affect adversely the other side, and we have to work out something new and I hope that this will be addressed very, very soon.

[(Lynne Lev)] Your Majesty, one of the concerns that I think we all have in terms of how this will move forward is the increase in violence and the growth of fundamentalists? Could you respond to that and how you see it playing out and what can be done to reverse fundamentalists?

[Husayn] I believe, Madam, that this is the greatest challenge that we face on probably either side of the divide at this stage. There are those who believe that we must carry out our responsibilities now and bear them in terms of responsibility towards future generations. And there are those who, may be, live in the world of yesterday or today and cannot see what this opportunity means. I believe as we make progress, God willing, we will pass through this difficult phase and we will see that the peace camp on both sides gains the upper hand as it produces results that affect the future of peoples, all our people, in all the times to come. The challenge is there. The problem is one of sometimes despair or lack of vision or too much trauma of what has happened so far. But let's hope and pray that we can pass through that phase as rapidly as possible. And I believe that we have the capability and we have the determination and the staying power to go through it and see the breaking of a fresh dawn, a new dawn in our entire region and our lives.

[Unidentified speaker] Your Majesty, you have painted a bold and encouraging picture of the (?word) peace, and I think that this dialogue will contribute to the climate and momentum that will keep the specific negotiations moving forward. Not everyone in the Middle East is committed as you are to a comprehensive peace. I wonder if you might reflect a bit on the role of Iran in the current discussions taking place in the Middle East.

[Husayn] I wouldn't know what to say in this regard, Sir. Iran is outside the immediate area of the problem that we are trying to address. They may have their views. They haven't shared them with us, officially. Nor have we had the chance to debate them with them. But I believe that resolving our problem removes the root cause of instability in that entire region. And if you would look at the past many, many years, the problem has been the ladder to power by many ambitious individuals or groups that sought to gain power.

Again referring to the question of fundamentalism or extremism, I am very happy to see that, over a number of years, there is an interfaith dialogue that is covering much ground. And I think all of us realize that many acts and actions, taken in many different parts of the world, sometimes in the name of faith and religion, are so alien to everything we believe in and to the teaching of our religion. So let us hope that what can happen in our area can positively affect the rest of the world. It was a beacon. It was the source of illumination for the world in the past. Let us hope that this will happen again. It is worth our very best efforts, and hopefully we will succeed in making our contribution.

[Rabbi (Sapisti)] Your Majesty, could you reflect for a few moments on the role of the United States in the short run, what might it do to be helpful in enhancing the chances that the accord will be implemented and peace agreements will be signed? But in the long run, what role do you think the United States needs to play—militarily, politically, and/or economically—and what are some of the cautions that you give to the United States about things that it might be tempted to do that might be counterproductive?

[Husayn] It is very difficult for me to cover all these areas, Sir. But I think that, for a long period of time, the message we have heard in our part of the world is that we in the area need to address our own problems and that the United States is a partner. We welcome that, obviously, and welcome the help, assistance, concern, and interests of friends throughout the world. I believe that the United States is in a unique position now, shouldering so many responsibilities the world over. So we hope that they will continue to help to the best of their abilities and help us all move toward the establishment of a just, lasting peace that we have sought for so long.

I think, Sir, that in the context of peace, again, the opportunities are going to be tremendous for people the world over to benefit from the results of peace, on the moral level, on the human level, on every level. And the area could see us working together with our friends here and elsewhere in the world in trying to bring and succeeding in bringing about the kind of change that is in the interest of all our people and the future generations.

The military dimension of the problem again is being discussed in negotiations at this stage to create the kind of balance that has to be addressed to remove the threat of—hopefully in time—of weapons of mass destruction, wherever they may be, and to remove the cause for spending so much on military armaments at the expense of everything else and the needs of people. But the United States will continue to have a very, very important role to play, and we hope that we will encourage them to do so, realizing at the same time our own responsibilities directly in this matter.

[Unidentified speaker] Your Majesty, I believe I am quoting correctly, you said that before the treaty is consummated you must negotiate. That is a model that I believe Israel has tried to enforce in its relations with Syria. What Syria apparently wants is to have a treaty before the negotiations, and that has been a great obstacle because the word normal has been used but nobody knows exactly what normal means to the Syrians and what normal means to the Israelis. And I wonder, because—as I understand what you have said—Syria is a part of comprehensive peace for the region, and I'd like very much for you to comment on Syria's positions with regard to any future peace treaty with Israel.

[Husayn] I can't speak for the Syrians, nor would I presume to do so. But I am in constant touch with them, and I believe that the recent statements that we have heard are a reflection of what I know personally and they have gone far more than has ever been the case there in the past, in terms of clarity and in terms of a real determination, to also seek the goal that all of us are seeking. So I hope [words indistinct] that the coming phase will see some real progress regarding the Syrian-Israeli dimension, regarding the Lebanese-Israeli dimension, and certainly as far as we are concerned, I think we are just about to start once again. Today in fact? [laughter]

[Unidentified speaker] May I, Sir, first of all thank you for this opportunity to speak with you, for your candor, and may we all be present with you when you have achieved the crowning achievement, as you have described it, ratifying the peace treaty, and may it be soon.

[Husayn] That is our hope, God willing, Sir. [applause]

Energy Minister Returns From Meetings in Iraq

JN2501181894 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1700 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Iraq has agreed to supply Jordan with all its needs of crude oil and refined products in 1994. Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Walid 'Asfur also said on his return to Amman after talks in Iraq that he also discussed with Iraqi officials the prospect of setting up a pipeline between Jordan and Iraq after the lifting of UN sanctions against Iraq.

Mr. 'Asfur said he also discussed the possibility of setting up an oil refinery in the Port of al-'Aqabah after conducting a feasibility study on the project. Iraqi oil exports to Jordan are exempt from UN trade sanctions. During the visit, Mr. 'Asfur also discussed with the Iraqis other aspects of oil industry cooperation, including drilling and exploration.

Says Iraq To Supply Oil

JN2601094194 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 26 Jan 94 p 1

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter P.V. Vivekanand]

[Text] Amman—Jordan and Iraq have agreed to study possibilities of building an oil pipeline to link Iraq with the port of al-'Aqabah after International sanctions on Iraq are lifted, an official statement said Tuesday [25 January].

The statement, issued by Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Walid 'Asfur to the JORDAN NEWS AGENCY, PETRA, said the agreement to conduct a feasibility study for the project was part of an accord Mr. 'Asfur and his Iraqi counterpart Safa' Hadi Jawad signed in Baghdad earlier this week.

The statement did not give details of the project except that the agreement also include building a refinery at al-'Aqabah based on studies on Jordan's consumption beyond the year 2010. In the meantime, Iraqi supplied oil in excess of Jordanian consumption would be exported.

PETRA quoted Dr. 'Asfur as saying that the project aimed at securing Iraqi oil supplies in a "quicker and safer manner once the sanctions are lifted."

The findings of the feasibility study will be submitted to the government of the two countries for approval, he said.

During his visit to Baghdad, Dr. 'Asfur also held talks with other senior Iraqi officials and attended a meeting with the energy ministers of Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Turkey on linking the power grids of the five countries in a regional network.

The agreement signed in Baghdad by Dr. 'Asfur and Mr. Jawad also renewed an arrangement under which Jordan will buy four million tonnes of crude and fuel oil from Iraq during the year 1994.

This would roughly mean a daily supply of 50,000 barrels of crude oil and 25,000 barrels of fuel oil—Jordan's full needs of imported energy.

According to industry sources, part of the oil will be supplied free of cost and the rest at market prices.

The Iraqi oil supply to Jordan is exempt from the sweeping international sanctions imposed against Iraq following its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Dr. 'Asfur also discussed with the Iraqi officials possibilities of exchange of expertise in oil and mineral exploration in cooperation with Jordan's natural resources authority and conducting studies on the al-Rishah gas fields near the Jordanian-Iraqi border.

The al-'Aqabah pipeline project appears to be a dusted-off version of a plan Jordan and Iraq abandoned in the mid-80s after Israel refused to provide an international undertaking not to attack the installations.

The Israel refusal, which was demanded by both Jordan and Iraq, [as published] prompted the U.S. Eximbank to refuse a $550 million loan for the project, which at that time was estimated to cost $1 billion.

The project was considered at the height of Iraqi oil exports through al-'Aqabah when part of the Iraqi oil exporting facilities were crippled during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

It envisaged laying a 1,000-kilometre long pipeline of 75-centimetre diameter from the H-3 pumping station in Iraqi territory near the border and down south through the desert to al-'Aqabah.

The H-3 station was part of a pre-1948 pipeline that pumped Iraqi oil across Jordan to the Mediterranean port of Haifa in British Palestine.

According to industry sources, the Iraqi part of the pipeline remains largely intact. Parts of the line in Jordanian territory near al-Mafraq have been destroyed.

Another project under consideration in the late 80s was tapping an Iraqi pipeline with the Saudi oil port of Yanbu at midway and building a link with al-'Aqabah. This project envisaged the linkage in Saudi territory near the border with Jordan in the south and would have substantially reduced the cost when compared with the earlier proposal.

Officials said the project, which at one point appeared to have been all but finalised, was no longer under consideration.

Transport Minister To Hold Talks With Iraqis

JN2501103594 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 25 Jan 94 p 3

[By a JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Text] Amman—Transport Minister Adib Halasah headed for Baghdad Monday for high-level talks with Iraqi officials on issues related to the flow of Iraq-bound cargo through Jordan and the operations of a joint transport company.

Mr. Halasah and his Iraqi counterpart Ahmad Murtada would cochair the annual board meeting of the Iraqi-Jordanian Land Transport Company (IJTLC) and review the company's 1993 operations and draw up plans for the next year.

The meeting will also finalise the 1993 report and annual accounts of the company, owned by the Jordanian and Iraqi governments, officials said. No details of the company's financial status were immediately available.

However, the officials said, the company's operations have been adversely affected by the continuing international sanctions against Iraq. Before the sanctions were imposed in August 1990, following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the company largely depended on transporting Iraq-bound cargo unloaded at al-'Aqabah to Iraq.

The company continued to survive after the imposition of the sanctions on Iraqi imports of food and medicine exempt from the sanctions, but the overall volume of such cargo has decreased gradually, with Iraqi government agencies as well as private sector merchants turning to Iranian, Lebanese and Turkish ports for their imports to avert the costly delays incurred while importing through al-'Aqabah.

The delays and higher freight charges are caused as a result of what importers describe as overzealous enforcement of the sanctions by inspectors aboard warships patrolling the Red Sea.

During his talks in Baghdad, Mr. Halasah, who is accompanied by the Jordanian board members of the IJLTC and senior company officials, is also expected to raise Jordan's concerns over further decline of Iraqi imports through al-'Aqabah following the reopening of Iraq's Gulf port of Umm Qasr in November, the officials said.

While on a visit to Amman in late November, a senior Iraqi transport ministry official was reported to have assured Jordan that there was "a political decision" not to let the reopening of Umm Qasr affect Iraq's imports through al-'Aqabah.

But a campaign launched in Baghdad to encourage private sector importers to use Umm Qasr through incentives such as free fuel and bunkering, and guidelines given to shippers to use small-size vessels suitable to the Gulf port's capabilities have fuelled Jordanian concrns.

In one case, the Australian Wheat Board was requested to use two 25,000-tonne ships to carry 50,000 tonnes of wheat to Iraq instead of one 50,000-tonne vessel. Umm Qasr can only handle vessels up to a 25,000-tonne capacity.

Jordanian shipping agents however, expect a minimum level of Iraq-bound cargo to pass through al-'Aqabah.

"Umm Qasr is suitable for Iraqi imports from the Far East," said a shipping agent. "But volume of Iraqi purchase from the Far East is not much anyway. The bulk of Iraqi imports is from Europe, and this has to come through al-'Aqabah."

Furthermore, said the agent, many shipowners are reluctant to send their vessels to Umm Qasr because most international insurance companies either refuse to extend coverage to the vessel or demand high premiums.

Umm Qasr lies in an area where the threat of mines planted during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war as well as the war over Kuwait remains high.

The Jordanian Shipping Agents Association (JSAA) has called on the government to cooperate with the shipping sector to devise a package of incentives to attract shipping lines to use al-'Aqabah.

Abu-Nuwar Denies Reports on Israel Boycott

JN2601115794 Amman AL-BILAD in Arabic 26 Jan 94 p 1

[Text] The visit by the U.S. commerce secretary to Jordan has raised many questions among the Jordanian public on the purpose and nature of the visit at this critical phase, especially since the U.S. secretary made visits to Jordanian factories in a move interpreted by observers as direct intervention in Jordanian industries, particularly pharmaceuticals.

Other sources stressed that the visit was directly linked to the peace process and the writing off or reducing the Jordanian debts, which was the most important issue on the agenda of last week's summit between Husayn and Clinton.

While press sources stressed that the visit by the U.S. commerce secretary resulted in a government promise to end the Jordanian boycott of Israel, acting Prime Minister Dr. Ma'n Abu-Nuwar stressed to AL-BILAD that ending the boycott was not at all raised by the Jordanian or U.S. parties in the recent talks in Amman. He also said the reports published on this issue are totally unfounded, especially since the Americans know full well the true Jordanian firm stand on this issue—that there should be a joint Arab position on the boycott.

In another development, the visit by a group of 83-rabbis, who toured Jordan from Amman to Petra, has drawn various reactions. Most people voiced concern that the normalization period has started already before any genuine guarantees to return the occupied Jordanian territories have been obtained and away from the comprehensive solution emphasized by the Jordanian Government. This was denied by Minister Abu-Nuwar, who stressed to AL-BILAD that this delegation was a tourist group, just like any other tourist group that visits Jordan. He said the competent authorities dealt with the delegation in that capacity, especially since members of the group were carrying U.S. passports that did not show any link to Israel or contain stamps to indicate that they had previously visited Israel.

Regarding the official receptions accorded to this delegation, Minister Abu-Nuwar stressed that they were not received by any official.

Away from Abu-Nuwar's statements, various Jordanian parties and public figures issued strong statements warning the government against falling into the trap of normalization with Israel and calling for confronting that normalization, which was started by the government and which means full submission to the Jewish state.

Banks Get Initial Licenses To Operate in West Bank, Gaza

JN2601092294 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 26 Jan 94 pp 1, 24

[Report by Muhammad Amin]

[Excerpt] The Central Bank of Jordan [CBJ] has decided to give initial licenses to certain banks to reopen their branches in the towns of the occupied West Bank and Gaza, which have been closed since 1967. The move follows the Cabinet's approval of the move and the signing of the Jordanian-Palestinian economic accord, which regulates the financial and economic ties between the two parties.

CBJ Governor Dr. Muhammad Sa'id al-Nabulsi yesterday told AL-DUSTUR that the CBJ has given initial licenses to five Jordanian banks to reopen branches in the occupied Palestinian towns as follows: The Arab Bank: Two branches, one in Nabulus, one in Gaza.
The Jordan Bank: One branch in Janin.
Jordan and Gulf Bank: One branch in Nabulus.
Jordan National Bank: One branch in Nabulus.
Arab Land Bank: Two branches, one in Bethlehem, one in Gaza.

Dr. al-Nabulsi noted that these licenses are initial, and the banks that are allowed to open branches must complete all measures and file all the necessary documents.

AL-DUSTUR learned that these branches will start their work after gaining the approval of the Israeli monetary authorities in accordance with the agreement reached through the Jordanian-U.S.-Israeli economic committee meetings in Washington. [passage omitted]

Cabinet Discusses Food, Medicines, Forms Committees

JN2501180294 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Out of the government's concern for the citizen's health and safety and the security of his food and medicine supply, the Council of Ministers, which held a session under acting Prime Minister Dr. Ma'n Abu-Nuwar, devoted a considerable part of its morning session to discussing the food and medicine issue in detail. It heard two detailed reports by the supply and health ministers.

In light of this and in reply to a question posed by the JORDAN NEWS AGENCY on this issue, the acting prime minister said that the government, since it was formed, has been working to serve the citizen and to provide him with the best health, food, and environmental conditions. He added: The food and medicine control process has always been continuous and active. However, there are some gaps and complications, and some times there are conflicts between powers that encouraged certain people to exploit this control process.

Some time ago, the Health Ministry began work to achieve the highest degree of health and preventive guarantees. The health minister's remarks fall within this framework.

Dr. Abu-Nuwar added: Redressing the health and medicine situation and checking for negligence and attempts to tamper with this situation is a basic issue. The government will accept no violation or negligence in this regard. The government will not excuse anyone and will take every possible measure to deter violators. To guarantee this, the Council of Ministers has decided to form two ministerial committees. The first committee will discuss food affairs and is chaired by the supply minister. Specialized experts will be included as members of this committee, whose task is to discuss the food issue, including importing, transporting, storing, distributing, and pricing foodstuffs. The second committee will discuss medicine affairs and is chaired by the health minister. It will discuss the medicine issue, including its fitness for human consumption, as well as importing, controlling, and pricing medicines. The two ministerial committees will submit their report to the Council of Ministers as soon as possible.

The acting prime minister stressed that Jordan is a country that attaches great importance to safeguarding the citizen's health and preventing all exports that do not meet Jordanian and international food and medicine standards and specifications.

The acting prime minister said: The government appreciates the concern of the majority of our honest merchants for the interests of the citizen and the homeland, as well as that of the majority of workers in the health field. However, it will never tolerate any violation, exploitation, or any attempt to tamper with the citizen's health, food, and medicine security, which is happening among a very limited segment of workers in this important field.

The government has already begun work on a host of legal and administrative measures to meet and achieve these important objectives in order to upgrade the level of health control on food and medicine in the service of the citizen and the homeland.

House Leaders Meet on Allegations

JN2401142294 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 24 Jan 94, pp 1, 5

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter Ayman al-Safadi]

[Text] Amman—Spokesmen and presidents of parliamentary blocs and committees today hold a "crucial meeting" to study allegations by Minister of Health 'Abd-al-Rahim Malhas that a good quantity of food and *medicine sold in the country do not meet standards and* specifications.

Acting Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament 'Abd al-Razzaq al-Tubayshat called the meeting after some deputies demanded that the House hold an emergency session to discuss the minister's statements that first appeared in a weekly tabloid Thursday [20 January].

About 30 other deputies demanded that the House hold a general discussion of the government's regulations on the entry of food and medicine to the market.

Dr. al-Tubayshat told the JORDAN TIMES Sunday that the meeting would agree on the steps that the House would take to investigate the minister's allegations and whether an extraordinary session will be held. He said the issue would be on the agenda of the house when it meets Wednesday.

Parliamentary sources said the House was divided on whether a parliamentary investigation committee should be set up to look into the minister's statements that appeared in a lengthy interview in SHIHAN Arabic-language weekly.

The sources said that some deputies wanted to hear the government's response to the minister's statements before a course of action is decided, with some arguing that the issue should be handled by the judiciary.

"The issues addressed by the minister, if proven true, means that the health of people is in grave danger. They point to real financial, administrative and political corruption that require the government to take immediate, firm and fundamental measures. They also require that the representatives of the nation support the minister," said 30 deputies in a request to hold a special session to discuss the minister's allegations.

Dr. Malhas told the JORDAN TIMES Friday that there was a deficiency in laws governing the sale of food and medicine in the market, pointing to the need of laws that would protect consumers.

He charged that a "mafia" of food and drugs merchants were violating the few existing laws that regulate the distribution of food and medicine. He said these merchants were resisting the new regulations the Ministry of Health has introduced to ensure that food and drugs sold in the market meet certain standards and specifications.

SHIHAN quoted Dr. Malhas as saying that a good quantity of food and medicine that reach the market "is the garbage of the industrialised world and is unfit (for human consumption)."

But Dr. Malhas told the JORDAN TIMES Friday that the weekly "blew (his remarks) out of proporition." He said SHIHAN "sensationalised" his statements.

President of Pharmacists Union Husam al-Din Mismar Sunday denounced the Minister's allegations and urged the government and the House to investigate remarks he made "against pharmacists."

In a front-page newspaper advertisement, Mr. Mismar sought to assure people about the safety and efficiency of drugs sold in the country.

Mr. Mismar, a former director at the pharmacy and medicine control directorate at the Ministry of Health, said the directorate examines and registers all drugs before they go into the market.

Dr. Malhas told the JORDAN TIMES that some of the ministry officials who are supposed to inspect drugs are pharmacists who own private pharmacies, pointing to a conflict of interest.

Former Minister of Health and serving Deputy Muhammad 'Addub al-Zabn said that all drugs that go to the market were examined by specialised committees at the Ministry of Health.

"The Ministry of Health is a scientific institution and it can never allow the importation of medicines unless they meet certain specifications," said Dr. al-Zabn.

Dr. al-Zabn said Dr. Malhas should have asked Parliament or the government to initiate laws if he saw a need for such laws.

The pharmacy and drug control directorate was established in the early 1980s by the then minister of health, Dr. Zuhayr Malhas.

Conflict between the ministry and the phamacists' union goes back to 1987 when Zayd Hamzah, then minister of health, insisted that pharmacies be attended by registered pharmacists.

Dr. Hamzah also banned the sale of medicine without prescriptions, except for "over the counter" drugs.

Informed sources said the ban was introduced to limit the sales of addictive drugs.

In his interview with SHIHAN, Dr. Malhas said that "pressure was applied," to overrule a Higher Court of Justice verdict that said pharmacies should be run by pharmacists in whose names they are registered.

The council for the interpretation of laws has overruled the court's verdict on the basis of a 1975 ruling that says pharmacists should not be in charge of their own pharmacies.

Dr. al-Zabn said that food shipments were also examined by specialised committees before being allowed into the country.

Other sources familiar with the situation, however, said that the inspection of food was the responsibility of various government ministries and departments and that that allows for confustion and inefficiency.

One source said that there were previous attempts to have one agency responsible for the examination of food "but unfortunately there was a power struggle (among the various bodies) and the effort never succeeded."

Sources pointed to the controversy over cooking fat shipments that did not meet specifications but were sold in the market in 1989 as evidence of the inefficiency of some of the departments entrusted with inspecting food sold in the Kingdom.

"Only a thorough investigation can end the controversy created by the minister's statement," said a source familiar with the issue on the condition of anonymity.

"What the minister said is dangerous," he said. "it has to be investigated."

"Parliament is taking the matter very seriously. It will take the proper action on it," said Dr al-Tubayshat.

Hasan Addresses Final Religious Meeting Session

JN2001101494 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 20-21 Jan 94 p 10

[Text] Amman (Petra)—His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the Regent, Wednesday called for the establishment of a religious institute whose main task would be the promotion of inter-faith dialogue in the Middle East, since this region is the source of monotheistic religions.

In the concluding session of the 11th Islamic Christian dialogue which was organised by the Royal Academy for Islamic Civilisation Research in cooperation with the Vatican council on promoting relations with other faiths, Prince Hasan said such an insitute would contribute to crystallising thoughts and ideas promoting the cause of peace in the region.

Conveying to the participants in the dialogue the greetings of His Majesty King Husayn, Prince Hasan stressed the need to expand the participation of youth in inter-faith dialogue and to make such meetings include the participation of all segments of society other than the elite only. He said that he believes university and college curricula should include ideas and concepts affirming the importance of inter-faith dialogue.

Statements issued by the Vatican condemning the occupier and aggressor at any time and in any place had contributed to shedding light on the tragedies of many people, including the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Prince said.

The Crown Prince proposed making the Mediterranean Sea linking the Arab World and Europe instead of being a sea splitting the two.

"Some people are ignorant about the essence of the Islamic message and accuse it of extremism at a time when 80 per cent of the world's refugees and displaced persons are Muslims," Prince Hasan said.

Cardinal Francis Arinze, president of the Vatican council on promoting relations with other faiths, also addressed the gathering held at the Royal Court, saying the two-day conference signified the depth of understanding between the followers of Islam and Christianity, who represent more than half of the world's population.

"We should all work for the good of humanity to create a better world and make a brighter future for all people," Cardinal Arinze said. "Providence had brought us here and facilitated the holding of this dialogue at the present time in history to work together seriously to achieve this goal through the exploitation of all available means, including the media, which as we have seen in the past, had the greatest influence in making it easier for us to achieve our goals."

The cardinal voiced hope that this meeting will be an incentive for the participants to be more prepared for the next meeting which will be held in 1995 in Rome under the motto: "Religion and the Environment."

The Vatican official voiced admiration of the special relationship between Muslims and Christians in Jordan and commended the Islamic-Christian joint culture which represents the accumulation of centuries-old relationships distinguished for justice and peace.

The cardinal presented Prince Hasan with the Arabic translation of old scrolls as a token gift.

Bilateral Peace Talks With Israel Resume

NC2601081394 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Dispatch from Washington by unidentified correspondent]

[Excerpt] Washington is certain that the Arab-Israeli peace talks will resume. Despite the media blackout imposed by the U.S. State Department on the talks, the first meeting between heads of the Lebanese and Israeli delegations Suhayl Shammas and Uri Lubrani was tense because of Lubrani's remarks before the meeting. Lubrani reiterated the same Israeli stand, which sidesteps UN Resolution 425 and instead talks about a Lebanese-Israeli peace treaty. Ambassador Shammas once again voiced Lebanon's rejection of Israel's suggestion, adding that such remarks are bound to obstruct the U.S. endeavors to bridge the gap in views.

However, the second meeting between Shammas and Lubrani was more positive than the first. The heads of the Lebanese and Israeli negotiations got to the core of the talks. Specifically, they discussed the agenda of the coming round of talks scheduled for early next month.

According to reports leaked to our radio, the discussion focused in part on a possible mechanism to give momentum to bilateral negotiations in the coming round which, according to U.S. expectations, must be different from previous rounds in terms of the need to produce practical results. In this regard, the head of the Israeli delegation once again proposed the establishment of a Lebanese-Israeli joint military committee to discuss issues related to withdrawal and security in the border zone.

According to reports available to our radio, the Americans have a solution for this issue. It somewhat goes along with both the Lebanese and Israeli views. The U.S. draft solution could be summed up as follows: It goes along with Lebanon's demand while taking the Israeli position into consideration. In this regard, U.S. might provide guarantees of Israel's withdrawal from Lebanese territory, but it would be a phased withdrawal to gradually ensure security in the south. The last phase of Israel's withdrawal from the south would go hand in hand with the last phase of Israel's withdrawal from the Golan.

The U.S. proposal also goes along with Israel's demand, but it takes Lebanon's views into consideration. In this regard, committees may be formed, but they will not be called military or security committees. Instead, they will be called specialized committees and be composed of military and non-military figures and will be part of the negotiating teams and not separate from them. This is the U.S. draft solution that peace coordinator Dennis Ross may offer during a possible meeting with the heads of the Arab and Israeli delegations at the end of this week. [passage omitted]

Al-Hariri Unwilling To Meet Rabin Before Peace Accord

NC2601090094 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Prime Minister al-Hariri will conclude his visit to Britain and return to Beirut in a few hours. He will attend a parliamentary debate tomorrow. In London yesterday, Prime Minister al-Hariri met with British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, who hosted a dinner in his honor.

Prime Minister al-Hariri has urged Arab investors to invest in Lebanon. He told foreign reporters that Lebanon will not sign a peace agreement before Syria and Jordan do. He pointed out that there is an agreement with Damascus not to proceed separately. He noted that the issue of Syrian troops in Lebanon will be discussed in light of the results of the negotiations with Israel. Here is a dispatch from our correspondent in London, Khalil Fulayhan:

[Begin Fulayhan recording] Prime Minister al-Hariri has stated that if Yasir 'Arafat wishes to visit Lebanon, he should apply for an entry visa. The prime minister was answering a question during a news conference held last night at the Foreign Correspondents Club in London.

He was asked: How could 'Arafat be asked to apply for a visa to Lebanon and is Ahmad Jibril asked to do the same before he comes to Lebanon to inspect his troops? Prime Minister al-Hariri answered: I have not seen his passport.

Prime Minister al-Hariri added that U.S. Secretary of State Christopher had told him that the al-Asad-Clinton summit was successful and good, adding that he hopes 1994 will be a year of peace. Al-Hariri pointed out that resettling the Palestinians in Lebanon is impossible for us to accept, and this is a principled stand.

Asked if he was ready to meet Rabin after attempts to bring Rabin together with other Arab leaders have succeeded, Prime Minister al- Hariri said: This is not a personal issue. I am not ready to meet Rabin before a peace agreement is concluded. The Israelis must withdraw first, and then we can discuss the issue. [end recording]

Roundup of 25-26 Jan Clashes in Southern Region

Israelis Shell Area

NC2501214394 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Al-Litani River basin and the outskirts of Zawtar al- Sharqiyah and Zawtar al-Gharbiyah have come under artillery fire from the Israeli forces positioned in 'Alman-al-Shumariyah.

Six shells originating in Markaba targeted the Majdal Silm woods this afternoon.

Israeli Shelling Wounds 5

NC2601062094 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Our correspondent in al-Nabatiyah has reported that members of the Amal Movement attacked al-Suwayda' position last night with machine guns and rockets. Following the attack, the Israeli troops stationed in al-Zaffatah shelled Habbush village, wounding five people.

Amal Attacks SLA Post

NC2601082494 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0800 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Our military correspondent reports that the South Lebanese Army [SLA] position in 'Arab Salim came under fire by machineguns, rockets, and artillery from the terrorists' positions on the outskirts of Habbush at 2100 yesterday. There were no casualties as a result of this attack. The garrison immediately returned fire and the SLA artillery shelled the terrorists' artillery positions and silenced them.

The Amal Movement has claimed responsibility for the attack and admitted that two of its members were wounded.

Israeli Shelling Kills 1, Wounds 2

NC2601102794 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Resistance fighters this morning attacked the Bra'shit position with machine guns and rockets. Following the attack, Israeli troops shelled Bra'shit village, killing a boy named Muhammad Kamal Shihab and wounding a woman, Wajihah Ibrahim Farhat, who was taken to Beirut for treatment, and a student, Murtada Zayn al-Din.

Al-Hirawi, Birri Return After Talks With al-Asad

NC2501184194 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi and Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri returned to Beirut this afternoon after meeting with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in al-Qardahah.

Al-Hirawi and Birri left for Syria early today to hold a private meeting with the Syrian president. They boarded a plane sent by President al-Asad to Beirut Airport.

The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY learned that President al-Asad left the delegations, which were still coming to his house to offer condolences, and met with President al-Hirawi for one and a half hours in the presence of Speaker Birri and Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam. They reviewed the situation in the region and the peace negotiations.

Al-Hariri in UK To Seek More Economic Cooperation

PM2501141094 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 24 Jan 94 p 2

[Muhammad Shuqayr report: "Al-Hariri Tells AL-HAYAH: Talks To Deal With Ways of Developing Cooperation"]

[Excerpts] Beirut—Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri arrived in London yesterday as head of a ministerial delegation on the first official visit to Britain by a Lebanese prime minister since 1975. During his three-day visit al-Hariri will hold talks with senior British officials, first and foremost his British opposite number John Major. The talks will deal with political, economic, and reconstruction issues in addition to the possibility of contributing to bolstering the plan to equip the Lebanese Army and internal security forces. [passage omitted]

Before departing for London, Prime Minister al-Hariri told AL-HAYAH that he is going to discuss with senior British officials, first and foremost Major and competent ministers, in the presence of Lebanese ministers, aspects of cooperation between the two countries in various spheres in the light of the plan prepared by the Lebanese Government to rehabilitate vital facilities, proceeding from the plan to begin the development and rebuilding process.

The prime minister expects the talks to include current political issues, bilateral relations, and the stage reached in the peace talks in the Middle East region in the wake of the success achieved in the Syrian-U.S. summit held in Geneva recently between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton.

He said that he and the delegation accompanying him are carrying files related to all that concerns Lebanon with regard to economic cooperation and the role Britain could play at this level, in addition to holding meetings with businessmen and representatives of British companies.

Prime Minister al-Hariri said that the government—through the Defense and Interior Ministries—has programs to modernize the weapons of the Lebanese Army and internal security forces, "taking account of our current conditions, which suggest that facilities should be offered to enable us to pay for the new equipment supplied to us." [passage omitted]

Comments on Relations With UK

PM2601104494 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 25 Jan 94 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Al-Hariri Tells AL-HAYAH: No One Can Make Decisions for Lebanon"]

[Excerpts] London, AL-HAYAH—Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri began his official visit to Britain yesterday. A series of meetings culminated in a meeting with British Prime Minister John Major. [passage omitted]

In a statement to AL-HAYAH, al-Hariri said that British officials are interested in developing bilateral relations, especially in work spheres. They are also interested in bolstering the Army and internal security forces. He stressed their support for Resolution 425 in order to liberate southern Lebanon from the Israeli occupation.

Al-Hariri pointed out that the policy pursued by Lebanon in the [peace] negotiations has produced positive results so far. He stressed that no one can conclude an agreement on Lebanon, nor can anyone conclude an agreement at Lebanon's expense. He said that participation in multilateral negotiations before progress is achieved in the bilaterals would harm Lebanon more than its nonparticipation in the multilaterals. He stressed the need to adhere to Resolution 425, "because it is the legal foundation for the Lebanese negotiator."

He pointed out that his government is working to tackle the peace challenge, to stand fast, and to rebuild the infrastructure without waiting for aid, despite its importance. Talking about the criticism campaign against the government, he said that the major part of it does not take account of the concept of the democratic process. "It is criticizing figures rather than programs."

Hizballah's Fadlallah on Resolution 425, Geneva Summit

NC2601135694 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1230 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] 'Allamah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah has said that UN Security Council Resolution 425 has faded from international and U.S. memory. The UK foreign secretary may, out of pity, pay lip service to that resolution; other politicians elsewhere may do the same. However, the issue, with its serious political aspects, is linked to the actual circumstances of U.S. policy. The United States is using its clout to ensure that the UN recommendation makes no mention of Resolution 425. This resolution is losing its relevance with the passage of time.

Speaking in a television interview, Fadlallah called on Lebanese officials to exhibit toward the resistance the same commitment shown by President Hafiz al-Asad. Lebanon is drifting aimlessly and its political life is coming unhinged, he stated.

Fadlallah said that Geneva summit has created a new atmosphere, but atmosphere alone is not enough. The summit may grease the wheels of the negotiations and cement Syrian-U.S. ties. The Arab region is in a state of flux, he remarked.

Al-Tufayli Urges Resistance to Normalization

PM2601143694 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 25 Jan 94 p 3

[Interview with Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli, former secretary general of Hizballah, by Muhammad Shuqayr in Beirut; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Shuqayr] Do you have a position in Hizballah?

[Al-Tufayli] I do not have an official position in Hizballah. As is known, I have given up official positions for some time. However, I am with them through thick and thin. I am always their brother. I prefer not to go into details. It is an internal affair.

[Shuqayr] It is said that you secluded yourself before the parliamentary elections?

[Al-Tufayli] I avoid talking about that issue in the media. I had my own view, and my brothers had their own view. It was an exceptional case. At any rate, please allow me not to address this issue in press statements. [passage omitted]

[Shuqayr] What is your position on the post-peace stage?

[Al-Tufayli] In order for us to be in the picture the question should be seen from all angles. There are a group of proposals in the region about the post-peace stage, like the question of resisting normalization peacefully. Some quarters are dealing with this question and setting conditions for it. What is important is not for me to look at the issue, program it in my mind, and form a beautiful picture of it. What is important is reality.

The question of resisting normalization through peaceful means and nonconfrontation with the Arab regime is not practical. Because the Lebanese regime clashed with those opposed to the Gaza-Jericho agreement at a time when it was opposed to this agreement. It killed and wounded many of them without any justification. It has ignored the case, not bothering to investigate it, despite its promise to do so. I was right in my position toward the regime and the government, and there is no need for me to reiterate it.

As for the second point, resisting normalization peacefully means in practice economic, informational, and diplomatic competition, and so on. Competitiveness between the Arab and Western markets is nonexistent, especially if we note that the U.S. economy serves the Zionist economy. And the United States has on several occasions reiterated its promise to guarantee prosperity for the Zionist economy and fight any Arab boycott. This means that competitiveness—even in its weakest forms—is not possible, because we do not have anything with which to compete with the Western economy. We daily wait for the sea to feed our children, that is what the West sends us....

Thus resisting normalization after peace—and in such a manner—is impractical. [passage omitted]

[Shuqayr] What do you mean by saying that resisting normalization will lead to clashes with the regimes?

[Al-Tufayli] For example, in the form of a demonstration in an Arab street condemning a political sin, and, as a result, the authorities confront it. Or in the form of an article by a writer, which the authorities may regard as a threat to its security, stability, and peace with the enemy, hence they resort to punishment, pursuit, and judgment, especially as we know that our regimes cannot accept criticism, so how can they be expected to allow major opposition to take place?

I would like here to point out that I do not mean military opposition, because I do not believe that there should be military opposition to the existing policy in Lebanon, because that would not serve the issue of liberating Palestine and our country. On the contrary, it would thwart the liberation march. I say that it is our duty to bear all psychological and physical pressures the regime may exert and to focus on the confrontation with the enemy, whatever the price. Even if that leads to formal trials, executions, and so on.

I am for carrying out operations against the Zionist entity and the symbols of this entity, even if the price is the execution and killing of the mujahidin by Arab regimes. That should not prevent them from continuing their resistance.

[Shuqayr] How can a peace in which Lebanon is a partner alongside Syria be reconciled with your call for launching military resistance?

[Al-Tufayli] We as a people are entitled not to comply with any treaty by which the Lebanese regime abides. We must continue to resist our enemy by all military means despite the Lebanese regime's opposition. Even if the entire world joins the peace process. Our duty and task is to complete the march of confrontation and liberation against the Zionist entity. [passage omitted]

[Shuqayr] This position may cause a clash with the allies, specifically Syria.

[Al-Tufayli] I am not talking about the present situation and conditions. I am talking about an assignment for all Arabs and Muslims inside and outside Lebanon. I am saying that these should be assigned to continue the liberation march. We in Lebanon are part of this march. I do not claim that we can liberate Palestine, let alone southern Lebanon, on our own. I say that continuing the march in Lebanon and elsewhere represents a start for a big tendency in the long term, in order to reunite ranks in the framework of a major liberation operation. That requires a great deal of work and changes. This is what I meant. [passage omitted]

[Shuqayr] So you are for a new form of armed struggle?

[Al-Tufayli] Of course, I am for armed struggle anywhere.

[Shuqayr] But conditions are not favorable?

[Al-Tufayli] I believe they are, and they will be more favorable after peace is established. Egypt remains the biggest proof of this. In my view, the anger and bombings the Arab world is experiencing are the natural result of the stage of peace and normalization with the Zionist entity. The more the regimes move toward peace, the more the peoples move away from them and toward liberation.

[Shuqayr] So you are for returning to the situation that existed in Beirut in the past.

[Al-Tufayli] I do not mix up questions, and we must distinguish between what is Western and what is Zionist, which remains a target for us as fighters, militarily, diplomatically, economically, or informationally.

[Shuqayr] Even if it is decided to establish diplomatic relations?

[Al-Tufayli] Of course we will resist that diplomatic presence. But we should not touch the other diplomatic missions or communities. Nor should any establishments—except those belonging to the Zionist entity—be hit. [passage omitted]

[Shuqayr] But you will in the end clash with Syria, on the grounds that it will support legitimacy to prevent operations after liberation?

[Al-Tufayli] When I see a Zionist target, I will hit it. And if the price for that is my martyrdom, so be it. I will not cause any problem with anyone. I have caused a problem for myself. I have never fought against the Lebanese Army or the Syrian Army. I fought against the Jews and patiently withstood the results.

[Shuqayr] Is that a personal opinion, or does it represent Hizballah's position?

[Al-Tufayli] True, these are personal views.

[Shuqayr] Did you not raise this opinion in Hizballah?

[Al-Tufayli] That issue should not be discussed through the media. [passage omitted]

Israeli 'Threats' on Eve of Talks Assailed

JN2501164594 Dam ascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: Israeli statements reeking of stubbornness, shiftiness, and threats were made on the eve of the talks between chief delegates to the Washington peace talks. General 'Uzi Dayan said: If the peace talks remain in crisis, the Israeli military is braced for the contingency of war. Gen. Amnon Shahaq said he did not foresee any change to the status of the occupied Golan Heights this year. Uri Lubrani, the chief Israeli negotiator with Lebanon, said those pressing for implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 425 do not care for peace.

Observers a re unanimous that the Washington talks are about exploring ways to terminate Israeli occupation of Arab territories and bring peace to the Middle East. They are agreed that as long as Israel continues to balk at the requirement of a complete withdrawal, peace will remain an impossibility. The Arabs did not join the peace process or go to Washington to appease Israel or indulge its wishes. They went to get their occupied territories back and promote an enforcement of pertinent Security Council resolutions. Syria wants the entire Golan Heights back. Lebanon and Jordan also want to regain sovereignty over their occupied territories, no matter how small these may appear to be. Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425—the mainstays of any fair and universal settlement in the Middle East—require an immediate Israeli pullout from the occupied Arab territory and an end to settlement activity. What is the point of the Washington talks if they are not about finding ways to implement these resolutions, remove the occupation, and clear the path to peace? Does Israel really think that the Arabs will define the shape of peace they want before the Israelis make a public commitment to a complete withdrawal as called for by UN resolutions?

Those who talk about peace being in crisis and raise the specter of war are not interested in making peace. If the peace is in crisis, this is thanks to Israel itself. It is thanks to Israeli stubbornness that the two-year-old Washington talks have hit an impasse. Had Israel proved receptive to a global inclination for peace, Middle East peace would now be an established fact. The Geneva al-Asad-Clinton summit has charted the course of true peace and given added strength to international efforts to that end.

If only Israel would end its intransigence and begin to act as if is bound by Security Council resolutions instead of creating obstacles and threatening a referendum on the Golan and talking about a crisis that may erupt in war. The shortest route to peace lies in the implementation of the underpinnings of the peace process—Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425, which are best summed up in the land-for-peace formula. If Israel has trouble relinquishing its expansionist blueprints and handing back the occupied Arab territories, how can it realistically expect the Arabs to concede their land, rights, and tradition, and bow to aggression, when they are impatient to see peace established so that they can return to their land and homes?

Syria has called for the peace of the brave. Israel must realize that unless it displays a degree of courage commensurate with the cause of peace, Middle East peace will remain an unrealizable dream. However, belligerence and saber-rattling on the one hand and courage on the other are strange bedfellows. But if the Israelis reconcile themselves to hard facts and stop showing racial hatreds and belligerent tendencies, they will be truly courageous. All the world is waiting for the Israeli rulers to adopt a positive stand in keeping with international law and the sanctity of the cause of peace.

Mideast Peace Seen at Top of U.S. Priority List

JN2601151494 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: The Washington talks among heads of delegations concerned with the peace process in the Middle East are continuing. Syria, through the head of its delegation, reiterated its firm stand toward the bases of a just and comprehensive peace. It reaffirmed that the full return of the occupied Syrian Golan Heights to the homeland is a basic condition for the success of ongoing efforts. In fact, Syria's stand from now on does not need any explanation or reaffirmation. It has been the same stand since the launching of the U.S. peace initiative that led to the Madrid conference. It is the same stand expressed in the Syrian working paper presented during the sixth round of the Washington talks, which is still the only acknowledged working paper on which the talks are conducted. It is also the same stand embodied by President al-Asad at the Geneva summit when he called for the peace of the brave—a peace that removes Israeli occupation and restores usurped rights to their owners.

During the Geneva summit, Syria, represented by President al-Asad, categorically, unequivocally, and clearly expressed its commitment to achieving a just and comprehensive peace and its response to all the requisites of such a peace. Meanwhile, Israel so far has not taken the anticipated and necessary step to push the peace process forward, that is, through an announcement of its full willingness to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories. Indeed, what we heard from Israeli officials does not foster optimism. These officials sought to cast doubts on Syria's intentions and on the use of the Geneva summit. They proposed holding a referendum in the Golan, as if the occupiers have the right to hold a referendum on territory that has been Syrian since time immemorial and that remains an inseparable part of Syria. About 150,000 Syrian evacuees are waiting for peace to prevail in order to return to the Golan and live normal lives in their homes and territory.

The head of the Israeli delegation to the Washington talks said that the atmosphere was positive and encouraging. This is because Syria affirmed its absolute commitment to an honorable peace in the Middle East. However, it also affirmed its adherence to a comprehensive solution on all the conflict's fronts and to the return of the Golan Heights to its people. In fact, it is impossible to talk about positive and encouraging atmospheres without an Israeli commitment to a full withdrawal from the Golan and without Israel's actual involvement in the peace process by fully responding to the Security Council resolutions and showing willingness to meticulously implement these resolutions. Israeli officials so far have not promised a full withdrawal, but instead have talked about a form of withdrawal. Syria, as everyone knows, will not relinquish an inch of its territory or any of its rights. It will never accept a compromise solution in the Golan that leads to sharing this Syrian territory and rewarding the aggressor for his aggression.

Syria responded to the U.S. request to resume the Washington talks on the level of chief delegates. This is because the United States is absolutely and clearly committed to the comprehensiveness of the solution, to the Security Council resolutions, and to the land-for-peace principle. U.S. President Bill Clinton reaffirmed these commitments. He said that a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East is a first priority for his government and that the United States will exert every effort possible to achieve the desired honorable peace. Here, we should recall that during the Geneva summit, President Clinton supported President al-Asad's call to achieve the peace of the brave and considered it the only way to achieve stability in the region.

The United States is playing a major role in pushing the peace process forward and rendering it a success. Hence, the positive results people are eagerly anticipating depend on Israel. When the latter abandons its policy of evasion, prevarication, and procrastination, puts an end to its useless maneuvers such as the idea of holding a referendum on the Golan, and pledges to implement the Security Council resolutions and to end the occupation, only then will peace be at hand.

Peace serves the interest of all. It serves the interest of the countries in the region, the world community, and the United States itself. The stability of the world stems from the stability of the Middle East. It is no coincidence or complement that peace in our region is at the top of the U.S. Administration's list of priorities.

Palestinian Alliance Offers Condolences to al-Asad

JN2501190594 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] A delegation of the Alliance of Palestinian Forces [opposed to the Arab-Israeli peace talks] extended condolences to President Hafiz al-Asad in the city of al-Qardahah, in northern Syria, yesterday, Monday, 24 January. The delegation included Ahmad Jibril, secretary general of the Popular Forces for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC]; Dr. George Habash, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine; 'Isam al-Qadi, secretary general of the Popular Liberation War Vanguards; Colonel Abu-Musa [Sa'id Musa Muragha], secretary of the Palestine National Liberation Movement [Fatah-the Uprising]; Dr. Fathi al-Shaqaqi, secretary general of the Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine; Dr. Talal Naji, assistant secretary general of the PFLP-GC; Fadl Shururu, secretary of the PFLP-GC; 'Umar al-Shihabi, secretary of the PFLP-GC Central Committee; Zaki al-Zayn, member of the PFLP-GC Political Bureau; Sami Qandil, command member and Lebanon secretary of the Popular Liberation War Vanguards-al-Sa'iqah Forces; Abu-'Isa and Abu-Hazim [not further identified], members of the Central Committee of the Palestine National Liberation Movement [Fatah-the Uprising]; and Brigadier General Bashir Nasir, chief of staff of the al-Sa'iqah Forces.

In the name of the Alliance of Palestinian Forces, the delegation extended condolences to President Hafiz al-Asad, his esteemed family, the political and party leadership in Syria, and the fraternal Syrian people, on the death of paratrooper golden knight Staff Major Basil al-Asad.

Afghanistan

Coordination Council Meets With Foreign Envoys

LD2501180394 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] The battles in Afghanistan have subsided. Our correspondent reports on the latest developments there:

Sources from the two warring sides present contradictory reports about the outcome of battles during the last two days. Both sides, however, confirm that battles in Kabul during the last 48 hours have left hundreds of people dead or injured. An official of the Ministry of Intelligence and Culture [as heard], who is close to the Afghan president, said today: Forces opposing the government have been forced to retreat from the positions they occupied on the first day of the battles. Furthermore, he said, 200 fighters of the [Afghanistan Islamic Revolution] Coordination Council have been killed.

Meanwhile, a spokesman for Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party of Afghanistan] said that in the battles during the last two days a number of areas, such as the Microryan residential estate, the senior officers' training complex, Hidgah mosque and parts of the Hudkheyl area have been captured by the forces of the Coordination Council. He added: A large number of forces loyal to the government have been killed or wounded in the process, and tens of corpses still litter the battle grounds. The spokesman also announced: A Scud surface-to-surface missile was fired from Mazar Sharif toward positions held by Sayyaf's Hezb-e Ettehad-e Eslami [Islamic Union] forces in the Karizmir area, near Paghman. He added: Paghman, situated west of Kabul, has also been bombarded by General Dostam's aircraft.

Meanwhile, reports indicate that during yesterday and today a Coordination Council delegation to Islamabad met and conferred with the ambassadors of France, America, Russia, and England, the UN envoy in charge of Afghan affairs, and an Islamic Conference Organization delegation. It was announced that these meetings with foregin ambassadors and envoys are taking place in order to enable the Council to explain its stances, while at the same time it is hoped that ways of establishing a cease-fire in Kabul will be achieved through these meetings.

Cabinet Meeting Views Peace, Jihadi Formations

LD2501195594 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] A cabinet meeting was chaired this morning by esteemed Mawlawi Arsalan Rahmani, the deputy prime minister [name and titled as received].

The press department of the prime minister's office told a Bakhtar Information Agency correspondent that various political, social, and economic topics were discussed in today's meeting and necessary measures were taken.

Also, an appointed cabinet delegation, including Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Mohammad 'Ali Javid, the minister of planning, esteemed engineer Bashir, the acting minister of foodstuffs and light industries [name and title as received], esteemed Seyyed Mohammad Ayub, the minister of water and power [name and titled as received], esteemed Abdol Hay Elahi, the minister advisor to the Islamic State, and Gholam Sakhi Mesbah, the deputy minister of information and culture [name and title as received]—that had been appointed to bring about reconciliation, peace, and understanding between Jihadi formations—presented their work report to the Cabinet meeting. After assessing the report, the cabinet approved the following points:

1. The present problems between Jihadi formations should be solved thorough talks.
2. All sides should try [words indistinct] toward the election of the future leadership in [words indistinct] six months.
3. The Cabinet delegation is ready to declare a cease-fire between the state and Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party of Afghanistan] very soon through delegations of goodwill.

Hekmatyar Reaffirms Call for Rabbani To Resign

NC2601083594 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] The Afghanistan prime minister has once again stressed the need for the resignation of President Borhanoddin Rabbani from his position and deemed it the sole means of resolving the country's crisis.

According to the Central News Unit, Golboddin Hekmatyar declared his own willingness to step down from the post of prime minister in the event of Rabbani's resignation and said that an elected government chosen by all the Afghan groups should then take over the administration of the country's affairs.

The Central News Unit reports that fighting among the hostile factions in Kabul seemed less intense yesterday compared to the preceding 48 hours.

India

Sharma Addresses Nation on Republic Day

BK2501151794 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1440 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Address to nation by President Shankar Dayal Sharma; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] Fellow citizens, sisters, brothers, and dear children of India! Tomorrow our nation celebrates Republic Day. On this auspicious occasion, I have great pleasure in extending to you my warmest greetings and felicitations. Our Republic Day is a day of national resolve, a time to contemplate our position as a nation in relation to the world around us and to introspect upon our duties as individual citizens in enhancing and safeguarding the gains of freedom.

As we enter the 45th year of our republic, each of us must realize and act upon the realization that increasingly the world of today will test our every sinew and faculty, virtue and ideals, every system and sector. More than ever before common sense and clean understanding of present realities enjoin that we must organize ourselves to stand on our own resources—human, institutional, material and spiritual. Indeed, we shall have to strive ever harder unitedly and with self-reliance to go from strength to strength, howsoever difficult the task may be.

For three centuries past, the history of the world has been determined by the relations between a few nations, even though they were involved in varying groups and in different periods in confrontation and war with one another. The waging of a valiant and principled struggle for equity and human dignity as in our country and other parts of the world was a crucially important trend in this context. In the present times and the future, the main features of the world's political economy will be molded by those nations which lead in science, technology and industrialization and occupy the commanding heights in global trade and commerce.

Today the world is at relative peace, threat of confrontation having been dramatically lessened and instead the scope for friendship and mutual collaboration having been enlarged. The leading nations are well-poised to cooperate in fashioning the emerging world order. Powerful and far-reaching initiatives in this direction are under way. A new global balance is being adjusted as between the continents of America, Europe, Africa, and Asia. A framework of guarded globalization including elaborate regulatory parameters is under settlement. New regional and zonal groupings are also assuming shape. Prestigious international organizations are facilitating peaceful establishment of the new environment for nations and peoples around the globe.

Friends! These developments impinge upon the lives of each of us as individuals and as citizens of one nation. Together, we must respond to the challenge and prove our mettle. Let us fully appreciate that within us we have the wherewithal to achieve positive dynamic transformation. Our nation has a tremendous wealth of talented and dedicated men and women comparable with and even superior to the best in the world. Our being wedded to democracy and having absorbed and gained fuller sensitivity to the concepts, processes and needs of democratic governance is an advantage of profound importance. We have built, gained experience in, and developed the institutional infrastructure and mechanisms of parliamentary democracy at the federal, state, district, taluka [revenue district] and village levels. We must impart greater qualitative and quantitative impetus to true democratic decentralization and augment political democracy with economic democracy. This would create the channels and scope for releasing and galvanizing the creativity and manifold genius of our vast human resources. Prudently husbanded, our remarkable range of biodiversity and mineral wealth, human talent, institutional structures and strategic location on the globe can spell rapid self-sustaining growth and development.

At the heart of this endeavor, we must uphold clearly and fully our great national values. The dignity of every human being, individual freedom, rights and duties, equality and social justice, service and selflessness and resolute commitment to materialize these must inform our tasks. Let us heed the voice of our sages and saints and learn the lessons from our own history.

Pluralism, oneness and equality are intrinsic elements of our heritage and comprise a source of national strengthen of enormous importance. For centuries, we have absorbed and reflected upon the truth of the oneness, of the inner doctrine and purpose of all religions. Let there now be full manifestation of this realization in our day-to-day actions in the social, political and economic areas of national life.

Friends! We Indians have to comprehend that the world is fast entering a new chapter in its history in which the modern imperatives of patriotic duty have to be analyzed, grasped and fulfilled by each citizen in his or her sphere of existence and service. The kisan, the jawan and the mazdur [peasant, soldier, laborers], our artisans and entrepreneurs, scientists, engineers, teachers and doctors, writers, poets and artists, representatives of the people, the judiciary, the civil service, and the armed forces, and especially the women of India, all of us must ponder over and perform with utmost devotion our respective individual and collective duty.

The father of our nation—Mahatma Gandhi—had said: I Quote: I want India to realize that she has a soul that can rise triumphantly above every physical combination of a whole world. Unquote. Our victory will be on the strength of our dedication to truth, nonviolence and unflinching constructive effort arousing the conscience of the world and the moral and ethical force of democracy in nations and peoples of the East and of the West.

India seeks peace, friendship, and cooperation with all nations and peoples, especially our neighbors in the subcontinent and other countries in Asia with whom we have ties of kinship and culture. We are committed to the wellbeing of all humanity and performing a creative role in world affairs. Equally, we shall zealously guard our freedom and national sovereignty and integrity. The government and the people of India shall brook no interference in this respect.

Friends! Let us strive to fulfill the dreams of those who gave their all for India's freedom and render service such that for generations hence our nation may regard us too as having done our duty well. Tomorrow, on our Republic Day when we unfurl the national tricolor, let us salute our flag of freedom and pledge ourselves to the glory of India and the good of all humankind.

Jai Hind [Hail India].

Black Day Observed in Kashmir

BK2601145994 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] In occupied Kashmir, people observed Black Day today on the occasion of the Republic Day of India. The Indian authorities took strict security measures and curfew was imposed in and around capital Srinagar. Black flags fluttered everywhere in response to call made by All Parties Hurriyyat Conference. At various places, people burned copies of the Indian Constitution.

Mojahedin attacked Indian military targets with rockets in Sopor, Baramula, Anantnag-Islamabad, Kupwara, Pulwama, (Charar Sharif), Bandipura, Badgam, and Uri areas. Mojahedin also attacked the Indian Brigade Headquarters in Punch Cantonment, inflicting heavy loss of life and property to the Indian troops. At least five people were martyred and more than 70 injured during clashes at various places in the held valley.

Foiling Pakistani 'Designs' on Kashmir Urged

BK2501163494 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] The leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, has said that the government should demonstrate its clarity of purpose and foil the evil designs of Pakistan on Jammu and Kashmir. In a statement in New Delhi today, the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader said Mrs. Bhutto's call for a Pakistan bundh [strike] on the fifth of next month cannot cover Kashmir as it is an integral part of India.

Measures Proposed for Kashmir Settlement

BK2501031094 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 17 Jan 94 p 8

[Article by A.M. Khusro, editor of THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS: "Tackling Kashmir Issue"]

[Text] All these years the Government of India took the position that the Kashmir issue had been settled legally and historically and that no dialogue was necessary on this score. But since 1984, particularly more recently, unimaginative and wooden nature of its Kashmir policy has led to a weakening of this position internationally. Pressures have mounted to such a degree that the matter could not be left in abeyance any longer. There has been an emergence of many new but important peripheral issues. By handling these badly it has strengthened Pakistan's position, so much so that Islamabad has been encouraged to ask the Human Rights Commission to send a fact-finding mission to Kashmir to investigate the violation of human rights by the Indian Army and the para-military forces in the valley.

Even when these peripheral issues are resolved and the wood cut to be able to see the trees, the main Kashmir issue will remain and will need to be tackled effectively. But the periphery must be addressed first:

(I) There has been a failure to start a political process in the State of Jammu and Kashmir, especially the valley, without the intervention of non-Kashmiri political parties in the valley, a failure to end President's rule and have an elected government.

(2) There has also been a failure to win over the voting and the non-voting population in the valley which is getting sick of the terrorist activity and would be willing to go back to the pre-1984 position of staying with India, provided that (a) fair and free elections are conducted; (b) a coalition government is not imposed on the people of Kashmir and (c) adequate economic and employment opportunities are provided to Kashmiris both within and outside the State.

(3) Owing to incursions by military and men from across the Line of Control into the valley, despite the presence of the army and the para-military forces at the border and elsewhere, there has been a failure to deal effectively with the terrorists and militants. There has at the same time been a failure to set up a Human Rights Commission early enough to demonstrate to the world that India does not condone atrocities by anybody.

(4) There has also been an unwillingness to allow various critics such as the human right groups, Congressmen and Members of Parliament from other countries to visit the valley and to see for themselves what is happening.

(5) When the population in the State of Jammu and Kashmir and specially in the valley became totally dissatisfied and the international community became a scathing critic on all the above counts, there has been a failure to start a dialogue with Pakistan and the various interested groups in Kashmir, giving the world a strong impression of adamance and total rigidity which aroused the international community further and enabled Pakistan to capitalise on this adamance of the Indian Government and unrest among the people.

As international community is getting seized of the Kashmir issue and agitations and pressures are mounting, India has had to concede a dialogue—which incidentally has been provided for in the Simla Agreement as well as in the earlier U.N. resolution. Our Kashmir policy has always been halting and Pakistan has been taking full advantage of this. However, with some dynamic thinking and action it should be possible for the country to get rid of the peripheral problems, win over international opinion and deal with the main issue from a position of strength.

It would appear that some of the following measures would have to be taken in order to achieve a position of strength:

(a) The composition of the newly-established Human Rights Commission could be strengthened further, in order to avoid some criticisms, and the Commission could be asked to deal firmly and fairly with every case of human rights violation and atrocities.

(b) Human rights groups and other interested groups and individuals who wish to visit Kashmir should be allowed to go there freely and see things for themselves. The positive impact of having seen things for themselves and even adverse reports by these observers would be far more positive for India than the abominable suspicion generated by the clamour that India does not open the area for a fair observation as it has numerous things to hide from the world and is actually condoning the atrocities by its security forces and others. Such visits, if permitted freely, would bring out openly the killings, the rape cases and other atrocities committed by the terrorists and their allies too. If Pakistan has been sending men and arms in huge quantities across the border, visits to the valley by international observers and human rights groups can easily bring out this phenomenon and open the eyes of the world than any assertion by the Government that such incursions actually exist. There is no doubt that India has incontrovertible evidence of many such intrusions, and is said to have handed over evidence to Pakistan more than once. But anything that India can demonstrate regarding such intrusions can ever equal the effectiveness of the proof provided by international observers.

Once a strong Human Rights Commission functions in a fair manner and identifies and punishes the offenders, and once free access to the disturbed areas is available to the international institutions and groups, India should publicise these facts in world forum and get rid of the sharp criticism that it has had to face. This will improve the credibility of India's arguments which in themselves are good enough but are being demolished owing to the emergence of the secondary and peripheral factors.

(c) Pakistan has been asking for a dialogue on Kashmir but India has been refusing it. Now that under heavy pressure or whatever India has agreed to a dialogue, another irritant which bothered the international community has been removed. The dialogue should focus on the alternative ways of tackling the basic issue of Kashmir. India's position has all the possibilities of being substantiated and a solution around accepting the Line of Control will not be found to be the least acceptable among the various alternatives.

(d) By far the most important element in the settlement of the Kashmir issue would be the generation of new signals to the Kashmir population to the effect that the political process will soon be revived, that elections will be held, that a democratic set-up will be in place, at any rate in the valley, that the Kashmiris will be able to govern themselves as freely as the Maharashtrians and Tamil people without an external party breathing down their neck, and that adequate employment opportunities would be made available to them within as well as outside Kashmir.

'Concern' Over Clinton Punjab Remarks Viewed

BK2501160894 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] The Indian ambassador to the United States, Mr. Sidhartha Shanker Ray, has conveyed to the U.S. Administration New Delhi's concern over President Clinton's views on the human rights situation in Punjab. Mr. Ray met the U.S. assistant secretary for South Asian affairs, Mrs. Robin Raphel, in Washington yesterday and discussed in detail President Clinton's letter to a Democratic Congressman, Mr. Gary Condit.

The External Affairs Ministry in New Delhi had sharply reacted on Sunday [23 January] to the development which comes in the wake of the series of negative pronouncements by the U.S. authorities on issues like Kashmir, human rights, and Punjab. Meanwhile, a U.S. official in Washington has said that Mr. Clinton's letter did not contain anything anti-Indian or sought to encourage secessionist elements. According to the official Mr. Clinton had mentioned that the situation in Punjab has improved and that there have been regional elections leading to the restoration of the local government and the level of violence in the state also declined.

A United States delegation has appreciated the working of the National Human Rights Commission set up in the country recently. A 12-member delegation consisting of two associate justices of the United States Supreme Court, four U.S. circuit judges, and five lawyers visited the National Human Rights Commission in New Delhi today. The chairman of the commission, Mr. Justice Ranganath Mishra, informed the visiting dignitaries that the commission will soon publish its own regulations and make people aware of its working procedures. The delegation has specifically appreciated the commission for taking suo moto cognizance of human rights violations and for its steps to order independent inquiries into various cases.

The Punjab chief minister has criticized President Clinton for his comments. Talking to our Chandigarh correspondent, Mr. Beant Singh, said the U.S. President is ill-informed about Punjab. The Sikhs are fully enjoying democratic rights in the state. Reacting to the alleged violations of civil liberties, the chief minister said he himself and the majority of the elected legislators, sarpanchas [head of village council], and panchas [village council member] in villages are Sikhs and the state government is curbing militancy and not civil rights. Mr. Beant Singh invited the U.S. President to Punjab to see for himself the smooth running of democracy in the border state.

Iran

Tehran Radio Cites CIA Director's Comments

NC2601083194 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] The head of the U.S. CIA organization has explained that Washington is watching Tehran's policies intensively. In his report to the information committee [as heard] of the U.S. Senate, James Woolsey claims that the Islamic Republic of Iran's administration is seeking to consolidate its military base and describes Iran as the most crisis-generating spot for the United States in the coming years.

U.S. Bill on Overseas Military Operations Viewed

LD2601133294 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1106 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Station commentary: "Bill Limiting America's Participation in Overseas Operations"]

[Excerpts] Any day now, the U.S. Congress will debate a new Republican bill about the method of America's participation in interventionist operations. The bill imposes restrictions on America's military presence on the international scene and also America's role in the UN. [passage omitted]

The imposition of such restrictions takes place when America is emerging from an era of defeats in her interventionist policies. The failure of America's hypocritical interference in Bosnia and the disgraceful departure of American soldiers from Somalia and Haiti forced that country's authorities to minimize such defeats by creating a legal mechanism.

Although the bill is presented to the congress by the leader of the Senate Republicans, far from being tantamount to opposition to the performance of the Democrats abroad, it is aimed at maintaining America's superiority and global domination—a superiority and domination attained at less cost and lower casualties. For that reason the American statesmen intend to involve the Congress, in addition to the government and its representative, in decisionmaking at the United Nations on participation in overseas operations. Under the bill, the Congress should be involved and before the government votes for interventionist activities at the Security Council, it should consult members of Congress.

The Congress claims that it approved the bill on America's membership at the United Nations on the condition that it be a fully fledged partner in that organization's financial and military decisionmaking. That claim reveals the fact that, to preserve her status, America has always deferred any fundamental effort to the United Nations. For that reason, after the failure in various operations and the inability to finance them, she asks the United Nations to pay all the expenses relating to the provision of military forces, equipment, and transport operations.

According to the leader of the U.S. Senate Republicans, the joint U.S.-UN operations in Somalia, Bosnia, and Haiti showed that it is not in America's interests to allow the United Nations to determine the country's foreign policy. In his view, the bill will not resolve all the existing differences between America and the United Nations but, through the participation of the congress in fundamental decisions, it will result in America's interests on foreign policy being safeguarded.

Here, one could say that giving credit to the United Nations would mean something only when it makes decisions in line with the policies of that country, and the decision of the Security Council to send forces would only be practical for America if the cost of the operation is incurred by that organization, with a minimum of U.S. soldiers lost.

Commentary Views 12th Round of Arab-Israeli Talks

NC2501155094 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentaries Group]

[Text] As you know, the 12th session of talks between the governments involved in the Middle East crisis and Israel started yesterday afternoon. Following the signing of the 'Arafat-Tel Aviv accord, these discussions faced a stalemate for four months. But after the meeting between the U.S. President and his Syrian counterpart in Geneva, a new round of talks has begun. The special characteristics of and the outlook for the new round of talks are discussed by Ne'matzadeh, an expert in the News Research and Commentaries Group.

[Begin Ne'matzadeh recording] In the name of God, the almighty and merciful. Good morning, dear compatriots.

This round of talks is largely on the level of the heads of the Arab delegations from Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine and Israel. The most important development compared with the previous 11 rounds is that this one is being held away from the propaganda atmosphere and the mass media, such that they have been described as completely confidential talks.

Even though the head of the Israeli delegation has said that the mass media and propaganda are being avoided because of the useless or harmful role played by propaganda in previous rounds, some political observers believe that this new tactic represents a middle line between Israel's insistence on completely confidential talks and Syria's insistence on open discussion. Perhaps the outcome of the discussions between the United States and Syria in Geneva on Sunday was to select this middle line: Open talks but far from the mass media and propaganda.

The other characteristic of this round is that no one has stated when the talks will end. The current round of talks in Washington is significant and sensitive, because of its links to last week's meeting between al-Asad and Clinton. The talks resuming after a long interruption was the most important outcome of the discussions between the United States and Syria. Thus, the failure of the current talks or, to be more fair, their becoming routine will only mean the defeat and failure of the United States in this phase.

The countries participating in the talks, particularly Israel and Syria, which are considered to be the major sides in this round—while trying to preserve the optimistic propaganda atmosphere created by the Geneva meeting—cannot hide their concern over the behavior and motives of the other side and have started blaming the possible failure of the talks on the self-centered and expansionist policy of the other side.

Irrespective of Syria's efforts during the Geneva meeting and afterward to display its goodwill and support for a peaceful Middle East solution, Israel has not held back from reacting negatively to the al-Asad-Clinton meeting. Thus, the success of the current round of talks depends on the outcome of a tug-of-war involving Syria's fundamentalism, Israel's behavior, and U.S. pressure.

Of course, the futile pattern of 'Arafat's experience in his unending talks with Israel and his wasted dreams is no secret to the sides sitting at the negotiating table with Israel. The bombing of south Lebanon by Israel in tandem with the commencement of the 12th round of Washington talks shows that Israel insists on showing its aggressive nature to the negotiating sides that have entered the negotiations with the Zionist regime and that it is very hopeful of leaving the talks with its hands full, helped by Washington's support. [end recording]

Velayati Meets With Tajik, Uzbek Counterparts

NC2601122694 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] On the sidelines of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) foreign ministers' conference in Tehran, our foreign minister, Dr. Velayati, conferred with the foreign ministers of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in separate meetings yesterday.

In his meeting with Dr. Velayati, the Tajikistan foreign minister explained the current situation in the country. Dr. Velayati expressed immense concern at the situation in Tajikistan and conveyed the regrets of the Iranian Government and nation at the pitiful plight of the Muslim people in that country. He expressed the hope that peace and stability will return to Tajikistan.

During the course of his meeting with Dr. Velayati, the Uzbek foreign minister conveyed greetings from his country's president to President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. He stressed the broadening of relations and the swift implementation of the accords between the two countries. Bilateral cooperation in the field of telecommunications, establishment of air routes between Iran and Uzbekistan were also discussed. The two sides also reviewed the situation in Afghanistan and called for a halt to the conflict by amicable means and the establishment of peace and stability in that country.

Kazakhstan Opens Embassy in Tehran

LD2501164594 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] The Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan opened in Tehran this afternoon at a ceremony attended by the foreign ministers of Iran and Kazakhstan

According to a report by our correspondent, with the opening of the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, political, economic, and cultural relations between Iran and Kazakhstan will be further expanded.

Nakhichevan Republic Officials Visit Tabriz

NC2501172494 Tabriz Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Azeri 1230 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Nakhichevan Culture Minister Geydarov has described the Islamic Republic of Iran as Azerbaijan's most influential protector. In talks with officials in Tabriz on 16 January, Geydarov said he regretted the Islamic countries' indifference to the effort by Islamic peoples to solve their problems and said that all Islamic peoples must make a concerted effort to solve the existing problems. He asserted: Some 20 percent of Azerbaijan's territory is occupied by Armenia. Some 1 million people in Azerbaijan, which has a population of 7 million, have lost their homes and property. They are living as refugees right now.

Geydarov thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran for its humanitarian aid to the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic [NAR].

NAR University President Gasanov has said his university is prepared to establish a new college for religious studies and teaching Persian language and literature with the help of Iranian lecturers. Gasanov arrived in Iran together with Geydarov to participate in the seminary conference on development in the Caucasus and Central Asia. In a statement to our correspondent in Tabriz on Sunday [16 January], Gasanov stressed the need to improve scientific and cultural cooperation between the NAR and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

During his 24-hour visit to Tabriz, Gasanov held talks with the officials of the State University on the exchange of students and lecturers.

Mediation Effort To End War in Caucasus Viewed

NC2501180694 Tabriz Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Azeri 1230 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Unattributed commentary: "Iran's New Effort To End the Clashes Between Azerbaijan and Armenia"]

[Text] Morteza Banki, director of the Islamic Republic of Iran Foreign Ministry CIS Affairs Department, has visited Baku and Yerevan. His visit marked the beginning of a new stage in Iran's diplomatic mediation effort to establish peace between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

President Levon Ter-Petrosyan and the Armenian foreign minister received Banki in Yerevan. He conveyed President Hashemi-Rafsanjani and Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati's messages to the Armenian officials. They explained the Islamic Republic of Iran's position on regional issues, particularly on the clashes between Azerbaijan and Armenia, and reemphasized Iran's hope that a political solution will be found to the problem.

Banki later left Yerevan for Baku to hold talks with Azerbaijani officials. He met President Aliyev and the Azerbaijani foreign minister and briefed them on his talks in Yerevan and the latest visit of Ambassador Vladimir Kazimirov, President Boris Yeltsin's special envoy on Karabakh, to Tehran. Banki's talks in Yerevan and Baku indicate Iran's wish to contribute to the effort to find a political solution to the war between Azerbaijan and Armenia. [10-second break in transmission]

The war has resulted in the occupation of a large part of Azerbaijan's territory. The fighting has harmed the humanitarian forces and resources in other fields on the two sides. And it has put economic, political, and social pressures on Azerbaijan and Armenia. These fields should have helped Azerbaijan and Armenia to strengthen their independence and complete their restructuring. Under the existing conditions, the war must immediately end before it assumes an international nature. The two countries' military forces must withdraw to their recognized borders in accordance with agreements, including that which was signed in Tehran in 1993. Azerbaijan and Armenia must hold talks to resolve their disputes. That was the objective behind Banki's visit to Baku and Yerevan.

Iran will maintain its mediation effort to realize that objective.

Senegalese Industry, Energy Minister Meets Habibi

NC2601123494 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] The Senegalese Minister of Industries and Energy met First Vice President Hasan Habibi yesterday and conveyed the warm and sincere greetings of his country's president to President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. He stressed the importance of the consolidation and expansion of the two countries.

During this meeting, he elaborated on Senegal's eagerness to broaden cooperation and exchanges with the Islamic Republic of Iran in the fields of minerals, oil, industries, and electrical power. The first vice president also referred to the Islamic Republic of Iran's wish to forge friendly relations with African countries, particularly Senegal. He added: Tehran and Dakar can set up a joint commission for broadening cooperation as desired.

President Says Ready for ESCAP Cooperation

LD2501174694 Tehran IRNA in English 1546 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 25, IRNA—President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani on Tuesday [24 January] voiced the Islamic Republic's readiness for closer cooperation with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

Speaking to the visiting ESCAP executive secretary Raffi Ad-Din Ahmad, Hashemi-Rafsanjani said the organization was pursuing human and holy goals and therefore it was necessary for all regional countries to strengthen their cooperation with ESCAP in a bid to attain those goals.

Many of the goals the ESCAP is trying to attain are among the priorities in the economic developement plan of the Islamic Republic of Iran, he said.

The president said that connection of Iranian railway to those of the Central Asian countries would prove effective in boosting mutual economic and trade relations and in transiting commodities from Central Asia to other countries via Iran.

The ESCAP chief briefed the president on some of the major programs of the organization including upgrading economic relations of developing countries, controlling the growth of population and expanding communications via Iran and Pakistan with west and west Asian countries [as received], ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] and ASEAN member states.

Holding a conference on women, expanding manpower and tackling the issue of disability and treating the disabled are among other goals of the economic and social commission for Asia and the Pacific, he said.

Committee To Debate Tehran's Membership in GATT

LD2501211194 Tehran IRNA in English 1907 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 25, IRNA—A committee is to debate Iran's proposed membership in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), a body set up in 1948, that is supposed to liberalize world trade. The public relations office of the [unspecified] Iranian ministry said Tuesday [24 January] that the committee was to debate the advantages and disadvantages of Iran's subscription to the agreement.

Armed Forces, IRGC Participate in Excercise

LD2601121394 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] The third stage of the massive Fath-3 exercise, which started two days ago in the waters of the northern Persian Gulf, continued today.

[Unidentified correspondent] Ground, naval, and air units of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps [IRGC] took part in this stage of the exercise under the joint Fath command. In the third stage of the Fath-3 exercise, battleships and frigates of the Navy and naval units of the IRGC—including the Marine Brigade, Kowsar Naval Brigade, and the Qader Logistics Brigade—attacked to recapture the areas in the southern coastline of Khuzestan, which had been occupied by the imaginary enemy, with support from fighter-bombers of the Air Force of the Armed Forces and heavy artillery fire from the Ground Forces of the IRGC.

Also, the sea-air high-flying helicopters of the Navy and gunboats of the IRGC attacked the vessels of the imaginary enemy. In order to achieve predetermined objectives, paratroopers of the airborne committee [as heard] of the IRGC, in coordination with the Air Force, conducted airborne operations behind the lines of the imaginary enemy and prepared the ground for landing paratroopers and commandos.

An informed military expert in the Fath command headquarters said: The Fath-3 exercise is one of the biggest—and the most unprecedented—joint exercises involving the three branches of the forces of the IRGC and the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran that has taken place in the waters of the northern Persian Gulf.

Rowhani Comments on Domestic, International Issues

NC2501203394 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 11 Jan 94 pp 11, 10

["Text" of interview with Hojjat ol-Eslam val Moslemin Dr. Hasan Rowhani, first deputy speaker and head of the Majles Foreign Policy Commission, by unidentified MAJLES VA PAZHUHESH correspondent; place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [MAJLES VA PAZHUHESH] We thank Your Excellency for granting us the opportunity to talk with you. The topics that we would like to discuss cover an extensive range because of Your Excellency's various responsibilities and records. However, we will have to limit these topics. With your permission, we will start with the Majles.

You are among the deputies who have been in the various terms of the Majles since its formation, and you are now the deputy speaker and head of the Majles Foreign Policy Commission. We would like you to compare the fourth term of the Majles with the first, second, and third terms. One of the things that is done at the [Majles] research center is to study the activities of the Majles and to see what steps can be taken to improve it. What is your assessment of the two years of activities by the fourth term, and what is your view on what should be done in the two years that remain of the term and that are extremely significant years, too?

[Rowhani] [passage omitted] There are many new faces in the fourth term of the Majles, compared with previous terms. This is one of the special characteristics of this term. This was not the case during the second term.

The majority of the fourth term deputies came to the Majles with a specific slogan: to obey the leader and to support the president and the government. Another slogan was the formation of a calm Majles within the framework of Islamic ethics and supervision. Actually, these are the slogans with which the fourth term started its work. [passage omitted]

In the one year and seven months since the fourth term began, about 140 bills have been approved. I think that this is a good figure. Some laws were important for the country. I think that the fourth term of the Majles has been successful in this. I am optimistic about what the Majles research center does. I believe that the fourth term will work more expertly and more precisely in the implementation of the Second Five-Year Plan and other laws. [passage omitted]

[MAJLES VA PAZHUHESH] Now, if you agree, we will continue our discussion on foreign policy.

As the secretary of the Supreme National Security Council and head of the Majles Foreign Policy Commission and because of your close contact with foreign political developments, please speak to us about the developments in the region and the world vis-a-vis Iran and Iran's position. Also, please state your views on the future and the direction things are moving, as well as what is being referred to as the new world order. What is the outlook at the close of the 20th century, and to what extent can economy and technology affect this situation?

[Rowhani] If we want to compare our current position in the region and in the world with our past position, I should say that the Islamic Republic of Iran is the manifestation of a well-established and strong country and that it can be counted on since it is a country that remains steadfast on its holy, revolutionary, Islamic, and national aspirations at a time when some countries change their face each day, each hour, and each month. But the Islamic Republic of Iran has shown that throughout the past 14 to 15 years, it has been able to withstand all vicissitudes. The world has realized that we are steadfast in our holy principles and aspirations. Also, we are faithful to our promises and our friendships with countries toward which we have extended our hand. Probably some countries are unable to act with the same sincerity when they are a target of onslaught. But the Islamic Republic of Iran has shown that it does not fear such tempests.

In their extensive propaganda, the enemies of the Islamic Republic of Iran portrayed Iran as a country seeking an opportunity to commit aggressions against other countries and a country seeking to interfere in the domestic affairs of others. But incidents during the past few years have fully proven how baseless this propaganda is. The Islamic Republic of Iran is neither an aggressor and opportunist, nor is it seeking expansionist objectives and it is steadfast in the principles that it has declared.

Iran's patient and friendly attitude toward the developments in Afghanistan, which has recently achieved its independence, may have been probably surprising for the world. However, despite its extensive borders with Afghanistan, Iran did not intervene in any way. Only the envoys of the Islamic Republic of Iran ran from one street to another amid fire and blood trying to establish a ceasefire and not to allow the flames of war to engulf the parties and groups in that country. Some of our diplomats were wounded in this process and some even faced the danger of being martyred. Even in the difficult days when many people left Kabul, the political envoys of the Islamic Republic of Iran stayed on.

The same situation is true in our neighbor countries to the north. In the Azerbaijani-Armenian incidents and in Tajikistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran showed that it does what it says. In the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia, the Islamic Republic of Iran has always tried to be a good mediator and to extinguish the flames of the war. It has never tried to exploit the situation, in the sense that it has never pursued its own interests.

The Iraqi case is a clearer example. This was a case of a country that had fought against us for eight years, a country that had perpetrated a series of crimes against our nation, and a country that confronted Kuwait, which had committed so much treason against our people during the [Iran-Iraq] war. But Iran accepted refugees from both countries with open arms. We accepted about 1.2 or 1.3 million Iraqis and tens of thousands of Kuwaitis when all border delineations had been upset, there were no borders, and we had a free hand to do what we wanted. But we did not enter Iraq. I think that the incidents and developments that took place around us make all those in the world who are clever and calculating—despite the propaganda that they disseminate against us—realize the truth.

I think that in recent years, the Islamic Republic of Iran has fully proven its Islamic and humanitarian nature to the world. I consider the position of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the world to be extremely good. All the hue and cry started by the Americans cannot convince their friends to sever their relations with Iran or to stop helping Iran. This is important, and more important still, we see how—under such conditions when all this commotion is going on against the Islamic Republic of Iran—Europe, Japan, and others have healthy political and economic relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. It is only natural for them not to want to leave a country that wants to live independently under the current world conditions—and a Third World country in such a sensitive area of the world at that—to be in peace. But fortunately, during the past 14 to 15 years we have shown that we are completely resistant and that we are very used to plots and to thwarting and confronting such plots.

Others, too, have come to know us very well. Of course, I think that this is the first time in history that the world is seeing Iran as it is today. Before this, Iran was always known as a country that was outwardly independent, but inwardly under the domination of others and it was either the British, the Russians, or the Americans who dominated it. But the fully independent face of the Islamic Republic of Iran is a face that was seen after the victory of the Islamic revolution and it was the face of unity in the religious and political management of the country. Until the victory of the Islamic revolution, and especially during the Pahlavi dynasty, these two managements were always in confrontation. During the Qajar and Safavid dynasties, the situation was different. In other words, at some junctures in history, there has been a closeness between these two managements. But during the Pahlavi dynasty, the political management was in total confrontation with the religious management. The revolution was the first time that the country had witnessed the unity of these two and this is extremely important, since we see that the same person who is the political head of the country is also the religious head. In other words, the issue of the supreme leader is an extremely significant issue that has been stabilized in our country and that our people have wholeheartedly and sincerely accepted.

The West thinks that Iranians accepted Imam Khomeyni but that they do not accept the supreme leader. However, things were later clarified and the world saw that the Iranians accepted both Imam Khomeyni and the supreme leader today. Therefore, a supreme leader will always exist. Imam Khomeyni, may his soul be sanctified, stood out at one time in history and we benefited from the light that he shed. Of course, we will always make use of the moral light that the late leader shed on us. But his physical presence was only for a while. However, a supreme leader will always exist. Therefore, the united management in the Islamic country has given the Islamic world the opportunity for the ruler to stand next to the people. [passage omitted]

Whether the world wants it or not, the Islamic Republic of Iran rules the hearts of the people throughout the world. This is not like the alleged world leadership of America, which accepts only itself! The Americans allege leadership. But they are the only ones who accept this!

It has been proved that they are not the leaders of the world but that the Islamic Republic of Iran is undoubtedly the leader of millions throughout the world. And it does not make any difference if these countries are near us or not. Our influence in countries far from us is bigger than our influence on our neighbor countries. The influence that we have in Algeria, over the hearts of the people in Egypt—despite their distance from us—and the influence that we have on Muslims in the Far East, in Africa, and in the American continent may be greater than the influence that we have on Muslims in our neighbor countries. Therefore, this is a moral and genuine influence.

This is in answer to the first part of your question on how we should view the Islamic Republic of Iran at this juncture in history. I think that Iran should be regarded as a power, as an independent country, as a country where religion and politics and people and officials are in full coordination, as a country that does not intend to commit aggression, as a peace-seeking country, as a country that does not intend to occupy another country, as a country that is fully faithful to its aspirations and slogans, and as a country whose word can be trusted. Today there is no other country but Iran in the world that portrays such a picture.

In answer to the second part of your question on how we see the world and the new world order, I think that we should expect many developments in the coming years. It may seem that differences stemming from the existence of two superpowers in the world may have ended and that it is the era of a new order where there will no longer be a threat of war and where peace and justice will reign. But this is not so. In other words, we have not only not seen a reduction in regional wars and clashes, but we have also seen the occupation of one country by another during this era of the new order. In other words, it was during the era of the new order that Iraq attacked, devoured, and annexed another country.

If this new order did not exist, such things might never have happened. We may not have had the wars that we see in Europe today, a clear example of which is Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as the ethnic wars that we have witnessed. It is not as though we can say that what we see today is a world of peace, of tranquility, and of a unipolar system. None of these have been fulfilled, and I think that they will never be fulfilled.

The incidents in the Soviet Union [as published] showed the Westerners that they cannot make a clear judgment of what will happen in that country. In the recent elections there we saw how those who put forth extremely ultranationalist slogans and spoke about the people's national pride got a higher number of votes. Even though their slogans are dangerous, the majority of the people voted in favor of them.

The elections in the Soviet Union [as published] were not a simple issue. It was something that may have completely shaken the West and made them realize that they cannot be very confident that the issue of a Soviet superpower has ended once and for all.

I think that new poles are being formed in the world. We see that the thought that in the new world order there would be only one pole, where the Americans would be able to act as the world leader and do as they please, has not materialized. I think that in the coming years, and especially in the beginning of the new century that you referred to, we will witness many rapid and important developments. As to what elements will play a role in these developments, I can list technology as one of the most important elements. Of course, reference can also be made to economy. But economic developments may also be the result of modern technology.

The issue of technology is extremely important. In other words, technological developments may make countries superior to the current powers and may lead to a complete change in the world situation. The world's military situation may also change because of technological developments. Of course, there are other important elements in the world. I think that the most important element that can influence the future of the world is economy in its general sense—which also includes technology and science—and culture, which includes ideology and religion. Other developments such as military, political, and social aspects will all be offshoots of these.

In today's world, technological and scientific developments are extremely rapid and awe-inspiring. The same applies to cultural developments. This very issue of the revival of religious thought throughout the world is an extremely important issue. The forecast in the world was that by the end of the current century there would be no such thing as religion. But today we see how, at the end of this century, religious thought has been revived and how the situation now cannot be compared even with the situation at the beginning of the current century. We will definitely witness the further expansion of such developments in the next century.

I think that the basis of the world's future developments will be economy and culture, and the Americans will not have the first say in either of these two fields! Possibly, as far as Japan, Germany, and so on are concerned, we can say that they will play the number-one role in the future economy. But as far as culture is concerned, we think that Islam will be considered an extremely important and great cultural power because we are now witnessing the dawn of Islam. The rays of Islam will undoubtedly spread in the next few years, and at the beginning of the new century we will witness new cultural developments under the aegis of these rays.

[MAJLES VA PAZHUHESH] Your Excellency's reference to technological and economic developments calls for discussing the fact that energy has been gradually playing a stronger role in geopolitical developments for the past decade. How do you assess this element, and how long do you think this development will last?

[Rowhani] Energy will play an extremely important role. Of course, a special period started in the world after 1973. This period concentrated on ways to replace [oil] with other energies. Much work has been done on this. And now, 20 years later, with the advanced technology that man has at his disposal, we should have witnessed many rapid and profound developments, but we have not.

Moreover, oil is now considered the commodity that is the source of many extensive developments in the various fields. Now we even see that aircraft manufactured with "composites" [preceding word in English] are stronger than aircraft manufactured with special steel. Therefore, in the future of industry and economy, oil will maintain its special place.

I think that the situation that the West, headed by America, has created for oil today is not only treason against the oil-exporting countries, but treason against all mankind. In other words, we are offering the world's most valuable commodity, which is also very limited, at extremely low prices. We are burning and destroying this commodity, and this is treason against the future of mankind. It is the Americans and the rest of the big Western powers who should be answerable to history for this treason.

It is within the context of the significance of energy or of black gold that Iran and, basically speaking, the Persian Gulf finds its special role. It is because of this role that in the coming century many of the countries that are not oil exporters will not only not be exporters, they will also have to become importers.

In the coming decades, it is possible that there will not be a commodity known as North Sea oil. Of course, some opinions are that the North Sea oil reserves will end much sooner. Possibly, in the first years of the next century, we will reach a situation in which not only will the Persian Gulf be the sole exporter of oil in the world, but Saudi Arabia too will be an oil superpower, followed by other countries such as Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, and so on and will be able to export oil and gas. The largest gas resources are in this area. Perhaps the increased presence of foreign powers and their arms in this region is because of the energy issue.

But we should also be wise in preserving this valuable energy resource. The Majles and the government should make plans and not allow this major asset to be wasted. We should have correct programming at home. The [Majles] research center should study ways that we can economize in energy consumption. As far as the world is concerned, the energy problem and especially the problem of oil will undoubtedly not lose its importance for years to come.

[MAJLES VA PAZHUHESH] The esteemed leader's emphasis on relations with America shows that the system strongly rejects political relations with America. From the point of view of slogans, what political and ideological logic do you have to offer in justification of this policy?

[Rowhani] Because of its historical, ideological, and religious roots, the issue of America is of special importance to our country. First of all, when we look at history we see that from its outset the Islamic revolution was a struggle against foreign, and specifically American, colonialism in tandem with a struggle against domestic colonialism. [passage omitted]

Therefore, we see that the struggle against America from the very first years of this movement was the pivotal and major slogan. On the other hand, the Americans too played a major role in crushing the revolution. We see how at the peak of the revolution, the American General Huyser personally came to Iran in a bid to crush and to destroy the revolution. Of course, we knew all these things at that time, and the fact that the shah had plans engineered by the Americans and especially aimed at confronting the revolution and Islam has become clearer now.

In his famous speech at the Feyziyeh School, which sparked off the 1342 [1963] movement and the 5 June 1963 incidents, his eminence the imam, may his soul be sanctified, told the shah: "Don't do whatever the Americans dictate to you. At least, think and see what they are dictating to you." Therefore, we see that this movement, which was a struggle against America from the very start, led to the victory of the revolution, after which the American Embassy's plots started. This was followed by the occupation of the nest of espionage and the revelation of documents for the world to see how from the very outset the Americans were working toward defeating the revolution and overthrowing the system.

Now, too, wherever there is a plot against Iran, against the system of the Islamic Republic, against the revolution, and against the Islamic movement in the world—be it in Algeria, Egypt, or anywhere else where an Islamic movement is seen—we see how the Americans play the main role in suppressing it. Thus, the issue of the people's enmity with America is both a matter of history and revolution, and of slogans and religion.

The Americans have always opposed Islamic thought and Islamic movement. This opposition and confrontation continues today, too. The imam, may his soul be sanctified, very clearly specified the pivotal slogan of struggling against America. Of course, it is true that we did not sever our political relations with America and that it was the Americans who severed their relations with us. But the imam stated his satisfaction at this. What did we need these relations for? In other words, even though the Americans started everything, both the imam and the people welcomed it.

Throughout this period, the Americans have not decreased their enmity even for one day. They have frozen our assets, but what we owed them, compared with our frozen assets, was minimal. Therefore, the Americans have resorted to various means to express their overt hostility toward us. And when they have entered a war against us with such hostile feelings, what reason is there for us to propound the issue of relations with America in such an atmosphere? Basically, it is not correct to propound this issue at all at this juncture in history.

I think that the esteemed leader's remarks on 4 November this year [the anniversary of the occupation of the U.S. Embassy] were extremely sagacious. He clearly stated all the reasons and logic behind his views. Reasons why we should not establish relations with America have always been listed, but it was necessary to clarify them and to give the reasoning why.

Our activities should be based on our national and Islamic interests. What benefits will our approaching the United States or our establishing relations with it have? It is extremely simpleminded to think that our problems exist because we have no relations with America and that if we established relations these problems would be solved. Undoubtedly, in our relations with America, we would suffer much harm and it cannot be proven that such relations would reap even one of the benefits that it is said they would yield, especially with America's current foreign policy in the Clinton era.

Basically speaking, America's foreign policy is very sick. Because of their many blatant mistakes and extremely childish behavior, the secretary of state and the National Security Council of America are in a shaky position. The Americans do many ridiculous and childish things and say that they want to behave with Iran in the same way that they behaved with the Iraqis, and that just as they exerted pressure on Iraq they will put pressure on Iran! Saying such things is extremely childish and thoughtless and shows that basically speaking American foreign policy is sick and unable to analyze world issues.

Therefore, at a time when America is our enemy and does not hide its enmity and at a time when our people have always been harmed and harassed by America, rapprochement with America will definitely be to our detriment. The Americans' violent treatment of a couple of our Navy officers on board "Iran Ajr," the downing of the Iranair Airbus, the destruction of the Salman oil platform, the Tabas incident, and so on all speak of America's violent and pitiless actions. For us, the Americans' enmity has been obvious from the Tabas incident to the downing of our plane and to its actions today. I think that the Americans are pitiless and illogical enemies and that rapprochement with them will definitely be to our detriment.

Moreover, basically, it is up to the esteemed leader to delineate and to determine the major and principled policies of the country and the system; and he has very explicitly stated that we have nothing to gain from relations with America and that such relations are harmful to us.

I should also add that some people think that the entire world is friends with America and that the only country in the world that is America's enemy is the Islamic Republic of Iran, or that all countries in the world are in love with America and that it is only the Islamic Republic of Iran that detests it. And with this type of assessment they ask: How can America, which is loved by everyone, be detested by you? But I think that this is not so. America has extremely strong military, economic, ideological, and cultural enemies in the world and of course at the top of the list of America's military enemies—despite everything that is being said and despite the expressions of friendship—is Russia. There are also China and France. From the economic aspect, America confronts Japan and Germany. And from the ideological and cultural aspects, it is confronting the Islamic Republic of Iran and revolutionary Islam.

Therefore, we can say that the Americans have many enemies. All the nations in the world are the enemies of America. The Third World is America's enemy. Actually, there are several superpowers that are confronting America. The military superpower in the form of Russia, China, and France; the economic superpower in the form of Japan and Germany and so on; and the cultural superpower in the form of the Islamic Republic. Therefore, it is not as though everyone else except us is America's friend. The tone that the others use may be different from ours. They may speak in a diplomatic manner or hide some of their intentions. But our position is clear and explicit.

[MAJLES VA PAZHUHESH] The truth is that the Islamic Republic's foreign policy has not fluctuated so much after the formation of the Supreme National Security Council [SNSC]. Please tell us about the process that led to the creation and to the continued existence of this council, what role it plays in various developments, and what it has been able to achieve.

[Rowhani] I think that an institution known as the SNSC is among the blessings that were bestowed on us with the latest directives that were issued by his eminence the imam, may his soul be sanctified, and which was created with the revision of the Constitution. Actually, many countries feel the need for a national security council after a period of war or military conflict. During the war, we had a Supreme National Defense Council. But we had to rapidly form another council known as the Supreme War Support Council so that it could fill the vacuum that existed with the absence of a national security council. After the war, the need for a centralized institution in which "politicians" and "military officials" could sit next to each other and adopt or coordinate military and political decisions was tangibly felt. On the other hand, it was necessary for the heads of the three powers to sit down together and to coordinate decisions.

In the Constitution before its revision, the president was the coordinator of these three powers. However, no mechanism on how to coordinate the three had been envisaged in the Constitution. But in the current Constitution, this coordination has been created with the emergence of a new institution in the form of the SNSC. In short, we can say that in the SNSC, defensive or political decisions or, in other words, military and state decisions on the one hand, and the decisions by the three powers on the other are coordinated and important issues that are connected with our national security—be they political, military, law-enforcement, intelligence, economic, cultural or other issues—are discussed and decided upon.

In the SNSC, the heads of the three powers; two representatives of the esteemed leader; and three political-security ministers, such as the interior, foreign affairs, and information ministers, are present. Also, the commander-in-chief, who is the highest ranking military official, as well as the head of the Plan and Budget Organization who is actually the coordinator of the country's economy, are also present. Occasionally other ministers are invited to participate when the topics to be discussed require their presence.

This council was effective in ending the differences between Iran and Iraq at that juncture and in freeing the prisoners of war as well as in settling the issue of the part of our borders still under Iraqi occupation. The famous letters that were exchanged between the Iranian president and Saddam Husayn were letters that had been discussed by the SNSC. These letters were extremely effective and important. The decision that the SNSC adopted during Iraq's war against Kuwait were extremely important. Also, the decisions that the SNSC adopted vis-a-vis the disintegration of the Soviet Union were also very important.

I should point out that the SNSC had foreseen the disintegration of the Soviet Union at least two years before it took place and had actually concluded how many countries the Soviet Union would be split into and what stance we should adopt toward it. It had even foreseen the plots that the Westerners and especially the Americans wanted to hatch in this region as many as three years before and had foreseen that world arrogance would one day provoke some in the area to confront Iran's territorial integrity.

Of course, it is necessary to explain that the SNSC's discussions and deliberations become valuable when they are also endorsed by the esteemed leader, in which case they are implemented as a compulsory decision. I think that this institution has been very favorable for the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Commentary Lauds Joint Majles-Cabinet Session

NC2501163994 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentaries Group]

[Text] Majles deputies and members of the cabinet met in a joint session last night and discussed the country's major problems. During this session, both the president and the Majles speaker spoke about the views and stances of the cabinet and the Majles on the most important political, economic, and social problems.

The remarks by the heads of the executive and legislative branches focused on efforts to ensure the public welfare by compiling and executing laws, in accordance with the line of the founder of the Islamic Republic and the esteemed leader.

These two points, which were jointly stressed by the president and the Majles speaker, speak of the common objectives of the executive and legislative branches in the Islamic Republic. In view of these common objectives, which pave the way for understanding between the Majles deputies and the cabinet members, contacts between the members of the two branches can help bring their views on the implementation of plans closer. With these contacts, which allow the exchange of expert views between the Majles deputies and the cabinet members, and more careful help in listing priorities in the compilation and implementation of programs, the approval and implementation of laws are further accelerated.

Under the present conditions when discussions on the Second Five-Year Plan are under way and when the cabinet and the Majles have the approval of the 1373 [year beginning 21 March 1994] state budget in front of them, the joint session of the executive and legislative branches is of significance. With the exchange of views between the Majles and the cabinet, modes of implementing the Second Plan as well as the 1373 budget bill will be further clarified, and the two branches can—in view of existing potential—compile a more applicable program that can overcome existing problems and fulfill the objectives of public welfare.

Pakistan

Afghan Delegation Meets Foreign Envoys

BK2601104794 Karachi DAWN in English 26 Jan 94 p 18

[Text] Peshawar, Jan 25—The four-member delegation sent by Hezb-e Eslami-led four-party coordination council has held a series of meetings with American, European and ICO [Islamic Conference Organization] envoys in Islamabad, Hezb sources in Peshawar revealed.

Earlier, the delegation joined by Hekmatyar's representative in Islamabad Heji Mengal, had held wide-ranging talks with the officials of the Foreign Office and the Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali.

According to report, the delegation on Tuesday [25 Jan] met the ambassadors of the United States, United Kingdom, France, Japan, Russia, China, Germany, Saudi Arabia and representatives of the ICO and United Nations.

Major thrust of the delegation during these meetings, the sources said, was on the formula it had discussed with the Foreign Minister on Monday [24 Jan] which emphasises simultaneous resignation by President Rabbani and Prime Minister Hekmatyar.

The main objective of these diplomatic [words indistinct] *was to acquaint these countries of the stand of* Hekmatyar on the ongoing conflict and its possible solution.

This exercise has also been necessitated to provide a resume to the members countries of the Security Council whose special committee is embarking upon a visit to Afghanistan in the next few days.

The delegation has advanced its proposals to the foreign diplomats which include formation of an interim government following the proposed resignation by both the heads of state and government. The proposal also include a framework for next general elections in the country and mechanism for a transition of power.

Foreign Office Clarifies Afghan News Item

BK2601102794 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 26 Jan 94 p 12

[Text] Islamabad Jan 25—A section of the national press has reported that the Foreign Minister to have stated [as published] that short of the resignations of President Rabbani and Prime Minister Hekmatyar there can be no solution to the Afghan problem. It has also been reported that Pakistan agreed with the demand of Afghan military Commanders that both the leaders should resign to bring peace to their country, says a government handout.

A spokesman of the Foreign Office has clarified that the above reports are based on a misperception of the Foreign Minister's Press conference given Monday [24 Jan] before his departure for Tehran. The demands for resignation and otherwise are conditionalities attached by rival Afghan factions for ceasefire. The government of Pakistan has cordial relations with all Afghan factions and groups. It has neither supported nor opposed these conditionalities.

The spokesman added that Pakistan has pursued a policy of non-interference since the establishment of the Mojahedin government in April 1992 and feels that the use of force is not a viable option for resolving the Afghan problem. In the larger national interest, the Afghan leaders should agree to a casefire and initiate a political dialogue for a peacefully negotiated settlement. The spokesman reiterated, the Government of Pakistan's resolve to strengthen bilateral relations with Afghanistan on the basis of internationally recognised principles of sovereignty and non-inteference.

Leghari Sends Greetings on Indian Republic Day

BK2601031794 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] The president and prime minister have congratulated the Indian president and prime minister on the occasion of Indian Republic Day today. In a message to President Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, Sardar Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari has expressed the hope that Pakistan and India will continue their cooperation in promoting mutual trust and creating understanding for the welfare of their people and for peace and stability in the region.

Ms. Benazir Bhutto, in her message to P.V. Narasimha Rao, has expressed the hope that Pakistan and India will continue efforts to improve their relations on the basis of the principles of the UN Charter. She said that it will be in the best interests of the people of the two countries and will help in the establishment of a durable peace and stability in South Asia.

Indian Proposals on Bilateral Issues Criticized

BK2601100994 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 26 Jan 94 p 1

[Text] Islamabad, Jan 25—A Foreign Office spokesman said here Tuesday [25 Jan] that the preliminary study of the six non-papers delivered by the Indian High Commissioner Mr. Lamba to Foreign Secretary Shaharyar Khan Tuesday morning indicates that there is not much room for high expectations in these non-papers.

The spokesman however, said that in view of the importance of the issues between India and Pakistan and as a courtesy to India, it was studying the papers carefully.

The spokesman was giving official reaction to New Delhi's proposals to Islamabad over the outstanding Issues between two countries and prospect of further dialogues. He said Pakistan hoped that non-papers sent to India early last week would have evoked similar serious response as Pakistan was now giving to six non-papers delivered by India.

The proposals sent by India include Indian suggestion to resolve Siachen problem, demarcation of the boundaries in Sir Creek area and Tulbul Navigation project controversies.

Much to the disappointment of Pakistan and other friendly countries India has not mentioned any proposals, core issue of Kashmir and modalities of holding plebiscite in held Kashmir under the UN resolutions.

Plan on Control Line Rejected

BK2601144694 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Pakistan has expressed its disappointment on the contents of six nonpapers [as heard] it received from India, as they missed the core and fundamental issues of Jammu and Kashmir. In his preliminary reaction to the nonpapers, the foreign secretary, Shaharyar M. Khan, told newsmen in Islamabad today we feel Indian policy is to talk on relatively less important issues to show the world that it is engaged in negotiations so that pressure of the public opinion and the governments is deflected from the core issue. He said none of these nonpapers really goes to the depth of the core issue. However, he said, we will consider these nonpapers very carefully and with the seriousness they deserved.

About the contents of these nonpapers, he said the first one related to Line of Control, suggesting to make it line of peace and tranquility. This proposal, he said, virtually asked Pakistan to accept status quo at the Line of Control. We have already indicated that it is not acceptable to Pakistan. The foreign secretary said the Indians did not refer to the question of repression which, in our opinion, is the real reason for tension in occupied Kashmir. He said in the fifth nonpaper on confidence-building measures, India has referred to peripheral issues, whereas we want to engage with India on important issues like nuclear proliferation—regional or global, control of mass destruction weapons, control of ballistic missiles which India has been indigenously manufacturing, and our proposal for a regional nuclear nonproliferation regime in South Asia.

Secretary Gives Assurances to Kuwaiti Envoy

BK2601063394 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0600 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Pakistan has reaffirmed its solid and wholehearted support for Kuwait's security and territorial integrity. This was stated by Foreign Secretary Shaharyar M. Khan during a meeting with the Kuwaiti foreign minister's special envoy in Islamabad yesterday. The envoy delivered a message from the Kuwaiti foreign minister to his Pakistani counterpart.

The foreign secretary said Pakistan's principled stand is that all UN Security Council resolutions should be fully implemented for the peace and stability of the region. He assured the Kuwaiti envoy that Pakistan will adhere to its principled and (?known) stand on the issue. The message was sent in connection with the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions by Iraq.

Secretary Denies Borders With Afghanistan Closed

BK2601153194 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Pakistan has categorically denied that its borders with Afghanistan have been closed and emphasized that recently 2,000 people who possessed a valid visa were allowed to cross into Pakistan. The foreign secretary told reporters in Islamabad today that only Kabul has been affected by the fighting and 28 other provinces of Afghanistan are, by and large, peaceful. He said a team from the Islamic Conference Organization is currently in Islamabad and a UN mission is likely to arrive in the capital soon. Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and the Central Asian states fully agree on the view that fighting in Afghanistan should be brought to an end.

Aliens To Be Expelled To Prevent Terrorism

BK2401120994 Karachi DAWN in English 24 Jan 94 p 1

[Text] Islamabad, Jan 23—The government will expel all illegal immigrants from Pakistan and will not accept any pressure in this regard.

Minister for Interior Maj-Gen (rtd) Nasirullah Khan Babar told the National Assembly on Sunday [23 Jan] that the government has decided to remove all illegal immigrants who were allegedly engaged in terrorist activities.

"We will not allow anyone to use our soil for carrying out terrorist activities against any country", he maintained.

Mr Mehmood Khan Achakzai had raised the issue in the House and demanded of the government to remove all illegal immigrants.

He was of the view that their (immigrants) activities were creating tremendous problems for Pakistan.

Maulana Fazlur Rahman, Secretary-General of JUI(F) [Jamiat-i- Ulema-i-Islam] however defended them and said today those who were being branded as terrorists were once declared freedom fighters.

He said that the government was taking action against Arab dissidents on the pressure of the US and demanded not to take any action against them.

But the Minister for Interior said there was no question of being lenient on the question. In this regard, he particularly mentioned Egypt and said Cairo was Pakistan's very good friend and it has raised the issue of Egyptian dissidents who were operating from Pakistan against Husni Mubarak government.

"Our government believes that these illegal immigrants are undesirable elements who could not be allowed to live on our soil", the Minister said.

He said Afghan Jihad was over and nobody would now be allowed to live in Pakistan without having legal documents. "These people should go to Afghanistan as we will not be offering them any refuge."

He further said hundreds of illegal outsiders have already been removed from the country and others would soon be expelled.

Eleven Newly Appointed Ministers Announced

BK2601154894 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Excerpt] The federal cabinet was expanded today with the inclusion of eight federal ministers and three ministers of state. President Sardar Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari administered the oath of office to the new ministers. The new federal ministers and their portfolios are: Anwar Saifullah Khan—petroleum and natural resources; Khalid Ahmad Khan Kharal—information and broadcasting; Khurshid Ahmad Shah—education; Makhdum Mohammad Amin Fahim—works; Nawab Mohammad Yusuf Talpur—food, agriculture and livestock; Malik Ghulam Mustafa Khar—water and power; Chaudhary Ahmad Mukhtar—commerce; and Julius Salik—population welfare.

The new ministers of state and their portfolios are: Makhdum Shahabuddin—finance; Ghulam Akbar Lasi—labor and manpower; and Abdul Qayyum Khan—states and frontier regions.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, who was present on the occasion, congratulated the new ministers. With the expansion in the federal cabinet, there are now 15 federal ministers and three ministers of state. [passage omitted]

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